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GODOY

*Master of Spain*

1792—1808



DON MANUEL DE GODOY  
(1767-1851)

As he was in 1792, at the age of twenty-five  
the year of his rise to fame and wealth

GODOY  
*Master of Spain*  
1792—1808

by  
JACQUES CHASTENET, C.B.E.  
*Membre de l'Institut*

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## Foreword

The lengthy bibliography – omitted in the English edition – which M. Chastenet appended to the original of this work, discloses only one book published in England about Godoy, and that some forty years ago. Little, evidently, has been written in English about a man whose policies and character had an important influence on the events leading up to both Trafalgar and the Peninsular War, and for that reason this book may fill a gap. At any rate, it is thought, the close historical connection here appearing between Godoy the man and Trafalgar the battle – and the connection of both with the formation of Mexico and the Central and South American Republics – may come as matter of surprise and interest.

But significance of a more general kind may also be claimed for the story. M. Chastenet, while extenuating nothing, is fair, and poses the question in his Epilogue whether, after all, another man could have done better for Spain; whether, in short, the efforts of a weak country in a strategic position, struggling by an almost desperate series of shifts and turns to stay neutral ‘between the pass and fell incenséd points of mighty opposites’ could in any case have had a different conclusion. Here surely is matter worthy to be digested by the neutralist in all of us: *mutato nomine de te Fabula narratur*.

An even more general reflection suggests itself. This is not an edifying story – far from it! – and may well raise uneasy speculation as to the relationship between the policies of statesmen and their characters, not all of which have been as unsuccessfully hidden as Godoy’s. Only the good man, said Confucius, has a right to rule, and it is a problem as old as the hills how any man born of woman can be enabled to survive the multiple temptations involved in attaining and retaining Power – not excluding the case when Power is a stake in an electoral competition. Plato, least fashionable of political philosophers, held that the solution lay in ensuring that Power should never be a source of either pleasure or profit to those exercising it; for that reason he was for entrusting it only to a race of political monks, care-

fully secluded from the temptations of women and possessions. This much can safely be said of Godoy does not prove Plato wrong and in the furniture of the rooms are both desks and beds. Also, it is a highly entertaining story, the personages in which – unique temptation for the maker of books! – were all painted by Goya.

The Author left a few Spanish words to speak for themselves in the French edition. I have left some in this English edition, but adding (in parenthesis), on their first appearance, the nearest English equivalent. The 'real', which makes frequent appearance in these pages, was worth about sixpence.

London, September, 1952.

J. F. H.

C'est ainsi qu'à la veille de la Révolution française ces trois personnages, si étrangement associés, commençaient, en costume de cour et dans le décor austère des palais de Philippe II, cette comédie, aussi vieille que le vice et la bêtise, du mari débonnaire dupé par sa femme et de la vieille maîtresse exploitée par son amant. La pièce commence vers 1787, comme un chapitre de *Gil Blas*; elle se terminera, vingt ans après, par un dénouement à la Shakespeare.

Albert Sorel

## CHAPTER I

*'De plaire a cette femme et d'être son amant.'* Ruy Blas

1785. MADRID. A dirty street – at that date all streets were dirty – dusty and badly cobbled, but where the sun, vibrating in the dry air, cheers up the whitewash of the houses and sets alight the dingy little panes in the windows.

A sudden hullabaloo; a clatter of horses on the march, a sound of trumpets; poultry and swine wandering about the road take to their heels; the passers-by – men with their capes thrown around them, women with their mantillas drawn over their faces – flatten themselves against the walls. At a street corner there appears, all in a cloud of dust, a glittering troop of cavalry: it is a squadron of his Catholic Majesty's bodyguards, returning to their quarters.

Young sprigs of the chivalry of Spain, they file past in good order, to the step of big-breasted horses with small, curving heads; manes and tails are pleated; the shoes strike sparks from the sharp paving-stones; the curb-chains clink on the bits. Clad in blue, pink and silver, shoulder-belts girt around them, swords beating against saddle cloths, sitting well down in the saddle, hands on pommels, cocked hats crammed over foreheads, the horsemen go by without bestowing so much as a glance on the pedestrian canaille admiring them.

Doubtless there is in this crowd one pretty girl of the people, one of those city chits with black eyes, roguish mouth, short petticoat and pointed shoes, whom Goya delights to paint in a series of cartoons which he is doing for the royal tapestry works – Goya, whose profile of an obese faun has perhaps been seen just now riding in a light buggy drawn by a gipsy horse – Our pretty girl has surely noticed in his rank a cavalier marked out from his fellows, most of them thin, swarthy and serious, by his broad shoulders, his full face, his rosy cheeks, his pale skin guessed at beneath the powder, his blue, almond-shaped eyes, his sidelong

glance filtering through half-closed eyelids, his sensual lips and his satisfied smile. The chit launches an 'Olé! long life to your mother' in the young man's direction and throws him a carnation – Too late! Don Manuel Godoy has gone with the burnished dust.

★ ★ ★

He is only eighteen, this charming guardsman, but, passionate lover as he is already, he is, already, no less surfeited by women's favours.

It is only a few months since he came up from his province – the province of Estremadura, a sad, fiery land of vast horizons, whose heaths, covered with cistus that flowers in spring and turns russet in autumn, are unpeopled save by flocks of sheep which have left the highlands at the time of transmigration; a land it is of tradition, bounded on the North by the mountains of Leon, on the East by the burnt Castilian plateaux, on the South by Andalusia the sensuous and on the West by Portugal with its vineyards, its olive groves, its orchards and gardens descending terrace by terrace until the sea and the fish are reached. Badajoz, that old, sleepy, episcopal city, is the key to Portugal, and at Badajoz Manuel Domingo Francisco Godoy was born on 12th May 1767. And he would always feel the call of this fertile, languorous region: he was to think at one moment of making himself its regent – at the least of carving himself a principality out of it.

Yet although his father, Don José Godoy, a notable and 'defender' of the city, a retired colonel of militia, was Spanish, his mother, Doña Antonia Justa Alvarez de Faria, was of Portuguese origin. Both came of noble families. In the Spain of that time many, it is true, laid claim to nobility on somewhat flimsy grounds, but there seems no doubt that both the Godoys and the Alvarez de Faria had good title to it. A Godoy had, it is possible, fought alongside King Sancho el Descado in the thirteenth century; probably another had been lieutenant to Cortes in the days of Mexico's conquest. And when Manuel was at the height of his power, the genealogists were to sweat and grunt in their efforts to tie up his family with the ancient Visigoth kings – a labour of sycophants with nothing but chimeras to go on.

What can safely be said is that the young man's tall stature, his clear eye, his fresh skin and his ruddy hair tended to stamp him as of 'old Christian' stock, with no admixture of Moor or Jew.

But, in Spain especially, nobility and wealth are often strangers. The Godoy ménage, though not poor, was very far from being rich. 'The Spanish army', said the old military regulations, 'is a diocese on the march'. It was a flattering description, but did not result in the pay of colonels, militia colonels especially, and still more their pensions, being anything but meagre. The family estates, also, were small and unremunerative. So that there were days when the cooking-pot, the national utensil, was not hung over the fire, and there was some difficulty in maintaining the large house, its facade all decorated with escutcheons of stone, where, at a later date, after it had been befittingly done up, their Catholic Majesties were to deign to receive hospitality from their favourite. Harder still it was to bring up the children as became them; first, the two girls who, thanks to the extraordinary fortunes of their brother, were later to become the Marchioness of Branciforte and the Countess of Fuente Blanca respectively; next, the four sons, José, who would be a canon of Toledo, Luis, who would be made Captain-General of Estremadura, Manuel, the entire family's future benefactor, and Diego, who would bear the title of Duke of Almodovar del Campo.

For all his modest wealth, Don José Godoy, who was a man of energy and enlightenment, set store by his children having a good education. Badajoz is a small town but it had some good schoolmasters, and to them the Godoy boys were sent on emerging from childhood. Francisco Ortega, Pedro Mimos de Mena, Mateo Delgada, Alonso Matalvo were their names: men with good degrees, who were to have their little hour of fame and taught the colonel's sons a little classical literature, a little history, a little natural science, a little philosophy – something different, in short, from the scholasticism, the ecclesiastical Latin and the Roman law which formed too often the sum total of a Spanish student's education. Manuel was later to remember their lessons when he tried in a nonchalant sort of way to reform the educational system of Spain.

Naturally, our young gentleman did not confine himself to book-learning; he learned also to draw a sword and mount a horse, and also, no doubt, being a precocious child in a hot climate, he began, in his country's slang, to 'pluck the guinea-fowl', and coo beneath lattice-windows behind which black eyes sparkled. We see with the mind's eye a little hand stretching through the rails, a complacent duenna, a half-opened door – Don Manuel is such a handsome fellow.

But the colonel was not the man to let his children vegetate in the soft languors of provincial idleness, and he was not without some connections at Court. José, the eldest son, was destined for the Church; Luis's ambition was to be a soldier – and here he is, of military age. So he was sent to Madrid and admitted into the bodyguard, that aristocratic nursery of officers. The young man got on fairly well there, and it was said that a highly, oh! very highly, placed lady took a favourable view of his person. The career was a good one and Manuel, the youngest, was not yet eighteen when he was told to follow in his brother's footsteps, was snatched away from the enchantments of Badajoz, sent to the capital and also put, by way of precaution, in the bodyguard.

The detractors of the future Prince of the Peace have taken a delight in painting a rather sordid picture of his early life at Madrid. According to them, he and his brother, Luis, had only one shirt between them which they put on in turns. Manuel himself, in the *Memoirs* which are his apology, while denying poverty on that scale, stresses the austerity of the life which he led in the guards' quarters. The truth is, no doubt, that his face, not his money, was his fortune, and that the first soon became a satisfactory substitute for the second. His fine uniform sat well on him as he followed the Court in its ritual peregrinations between Madrid, Aranjuez, la Granja and the Escorial, and, though he did his service conscientiously enough, whether on horseback or in the royal ante-chamber, he left himself sufficient leisure to take full advantage of the agreeable life which Spanish women, noble and simple, made easy for young gentlemen.

If truth be told, though a measure of discreet amusement was not impossible at the Spanish Court, official life was drab.

The Sovereign was the aged Charles III; he had become King of Spain in 1759 by the death of his brother, after having been King of the Two Sicilies for twenty-five years. He was an odd man, atrociously ugly with his huge, pointed nose and his thin, triangular face furrowed with wrinkles; his clothes were rustic and he would never have himself measured for them; not in the least a fool, he was both sarcastic and superstitious, the inveterate enemy of the Jesuits and the passionate devotee of the Immaculate Conception, the flouter of the Pope and the slave of his confessor, not incapable of liberalism but an alarming despot in the home – a fairly good specimen, after all, of the ‘enlightened despot’. More Bourbon than Spanish, he tried with varying success to rouse his subjects from the state of torpor which they seemed to prefer. ‘They are like children’, he said once, ‘who cry when their faces are washed’. With intelligent and reforming ministers for his advisers, he drove canals and roads, encouraged a rational husbandry, declared war on mortmain, started manufacturing industries, endowed educational and charitable establishments, and brushed up relations between the American colonies and the mother country: at the same time, being a man who could keep his fingers out of nothing, he imposed bans on hats with broad brims and on bullfighting: the affair of the hats nearly caused a revolution and *corridas* went on as before.

He was a chaste man and had had, so far as is known, no relations with a woman since the death of his wife in 1760. His one passion in life was the Bourbon passion *par excellence* – the chase. Every day, rain or sun, frost or overwhelming heat, Charles III, after hearing mass, transacting business with his ministers, seeing his confessor and holding a diplomatic levée, would go out hunting for two or three hours in the afternoon, returning only at dusk. If hunting is really the word for those gargantuan massacres of bucks, stags, roebuck and wild boars which, on great occasions, kept more than two thousand beaters busy and, even on ordinary days, needed two hundred mules to carry about the royal paraphernalia! (The excuse for these massacres, if there is one, would

be that in the Spain of those days there was very little hunting, so that all this game, had it not fallen to august firing parties, would no doubt have caused great damage to the crops.) With evening come, the king, back in his chateau, would talk at table of the day's hunting, make up a party of reversi, sup at half past nine – when he would toss biscuits to his hounds – and be in bed before eleven.

Without any doubt the youthful Manuel Godoy, during his service in the ante-chambers of the Palace of Madrid, in the corridors of the Escorial or in the gardens of Aranjuez, often came across the King, though he can hardly have attracted his attention; also he met there the heir to the throne, the Prince of the Asturias, and the Princess, his wife. And the latter did notice him.

The Prince and Princess of the Asturias were certainly an odd couple, presenting the strangest differences.

In 1785 the Prince was a strapping fellow of thirty seven, fairly tall, putting on weight, with a small head, regular features, round eyes, a ruddy complexion and a long nose which overhung a weak mouth and a protruding chin – the whole combined with what the courtiers called an air of majestic benevolence, and the ill-disposed, stupidity. Physically, no doubt, he took much more than did his skinny father after his maternal grandfather, Frederick Augustus, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, of buxom memory. He was only Charles III's second son, but his heir; because Felipe Pascal, his elder brother, had been discharged from the succession for feeble-mindedness, before dying in 1777. It would be going too far to say that the Prince of the Asturias was feeble-minded; he was a good-natured man with a fair memory and gave proof at need of judgement of a sort; but he always seemed what goodwives call a little 'arrested'. Physically he was most active, hunting, like his father, for long hours on nearly every one of God's days and looking on it as a sort of sacrament. On one occasion when he was about to go a-hunting, news was brought to him that one of his children was dying; he merely answered: 'Well, what can I do about it?' and set off. The gun proving sometimes insufficiently lethal to satisfy his taste for slaughter, he once had a salvo of artillery fired on a herd of two thousand roe-

buck who had previously been parked in position.

His other hobby was carpentering with his own hands; he was more at home in the stables than in the drawing room and preferred to the society of courtiers that of grooms with whom he did not disdain to practise an occasional wrestling-throw. Intellectually, he was sluggish in the extreme, and his natural lack of intellectual activity, to which was added an unfortunate timidity, was encouraged by the surly contempt with which his father treated him. Having just enough sense to feel himself mediocre, rejected and frustrated, the heir to the throne of the Spains took refuge in the practice of a narrow piety and in a state of mental inactivity which would very occasionally be broken by some access of violence. In a world which he dimly felt to be his enemy he had reached the point of looking for nothing but tranquillity for himself. Anyone dispensing him from the need to take a decision himself was his friend. He would cheerfully give up anything if he could thereby avoid undergoing a flood of someone else's tears or even having to see a cross face. And he was credulous only because he found credulity less fatiguing than distrust, and therefore preferable. To this passion for tranquillity he was in the end to sacrifice, decent and well-intentioned as he was, his authority as prince, his dignity as husband, the interests of his subjects and, last of all, his crown. Let it be said in his favour that he protected Goya, whom he made his painter-in-ordinary, and that he loved music. He even played the violin passably and took his part in chamber quartettes. But one day, when one of his partners had taken the liberty of respectfully telling him that he was going too fast and must slow up a little, he answered, in all good faith, 'A prince never slows up!'

Now, the wife of this easy-going, limited man was a woman who was temperamental to excess.

Maria Luisa of Parma was his first cousin, daughter of the Infante Felipe, brother of Charles III and sovereign Prince of Parma, Piacenza and Guastalla. She was by her mother, Madame Louise of France, a grand-daughter of Louis XV. Born in 1751, she was barely thirteen when she was affianced to the Prince of the Asturias, who was three years older than herself. But only when she

had reached fourteen did she go to Spain where the nuptials were celebrated.

Till that happened, she stayed in Parma, where her tutor, who was also her brother Ferdinand's, directed her education. That tutor was none other than Condillac, the philosopher-abbé. It was, it is said, for the benefit of his pupils that he devised his celebrated fiction of 'the statue'. ('It is rose-perfume . . .')<sup>1</sup> It is doubtful whether Princess Maria Luisa, for all her natural inclinations, got much from sensationalist philosophy.

In 1785, a wife of more than twenty years' standing and the mother of five children, she was a matron of thirty-four; the portrait painted by Goya at about this time and now hanging in the Prado gives us a striking impression of her. Wearing one of those vast hats, all an incongruous medley of ribbons, laces, ruchings and feathers, which were then in fashion at Versailles, and enormous ear-rings, a linen fichu tied across a not unattractive bust, tightly corseted, with fine embroideries on her short-sleeved dress and a fan in her chubby hand, she seems, so far as finery is concerned, to be very much like any other great lady of the time. But we have hardly eyes for this elaborate and dazzling toilette: what we see most of all, what almost fascinates us, is the rather flat face beneath the great masses of chestnut hair, the rounded nose, the thin-lipped mouth of sinuous design, the heavy chin and, above all, the great eyes from which restlessness and desire look out.

She has not yet become the lascivious pander, with the fleshy face, the provocative air and the flesh at once sullied and on offer, of Goya's later portrait – not that she took offence at it; but here already is a passionate, unsatisfied woman, bursting with ill-restrained desires. We can divine, beneath the robes of ceremony, the appalling *ennui* which must, from the start, have afflicted Condillac's young pupil in the heart of a starched and gloomy Court, beside a great booby of a husband and beneath the iron

<sup>1</sup> In his *Traité des sensations*, Condillac (1715–1780) sought to show that all human acuity and knowledge are transformed sensation. To this end, he imagined a statue organised inwardly like a man, animated by a soul which had never received an idea, into which no sense-impression had ever penetrated. He then unlocked its senses one by one, beginning with smell, as the sense that contributes least to human knowledge.

rod of a caustic and finicking father-in-law.

Maria Luisa was a frivolous creature, quite without intellectual curiosity, and who adored going out, dancing and showing off; almost the only distractions she was allowed were the sight of Charles III feeding his dogs, holocausts of game, exhausting rides on horseback, boring receptions of ambassadors' wives and, at stated intervals, the formal kissings of hands which caused the nobility of Spain to file past with measured tread before the Royal Family. She was energetic, imperious and with a natural liking for power; but it was little use dominating her placid husband when he was himself kept systematically away from public business. She was in love with love – physical love at that: but, if the Prince of the Asturias made her enceinte at regular intervals, it was, as far as he was concerned, only a public duty, which he performed without either enthusiasm or imagination and was to slough the moment that she had ceased to be of child-bearing age.



She had at first been prudent and in 1782 Bourgoing, the Frenchman, was still writing of her: 'Madame the Princess of the Asturias, whose kindness, wit and natural graces have an irresistible charm, spends her whole time in her apartments where almost her only pleasures are conversation and music'. But these innocent pastimes could not content her passionate nature and it is not surprising that, to escape from boredom, the Princess quickly looked around her for men friends.

That these friendships were at first platonic is possible. That this idle and somewhat hypocritical Court may have quickly tended to exaggerate the indiscretions of a young and vibrant woman, whom her surroundings were asphyxiating, is probable. What is known of Maria Luisa's later life makes it, all the same, necessary to give some credence to the rumours which ran around about her flightiness. In the end, at any rate, these rumours became sufficiently concrete to reach the ears of Charles III, for whom morals were no laughing matter. He gave his daughter-in-law a severe scolding, which reduced her to tears but did not otherwise change the course of things. Then the Sovereign took

stronger measures: the moment information reached him that a young man seemed to be getting on too well with the Princess, the unfortunate would find himself condemned to an exile that was often of Ovidian rigour.

The first to undergo this fate was a passionate Andalusian, the Count of Teba, heir of the grandeeship of Montijo; next came a Portuguese gentleman, the Count of Lancastre; then followed the handsome Pignatelli, also the lover of that bewitching Duchess of Alba whose path then for the first time crossed that of Maria Luisa; a Spaniard of the name of Ortiz, a gentleman of the royal Chamber, brought up the rear.

The Princess, who was both getting on and beginning to find these aristocratic *amours* dangerously exposed to view, then took to casting favourable glances at the bodyguards, who had the advantage of being both young and reasonably anonymous. After a few experiments, the first that she singled out was none other than Don Luis Godoy, Manuel's elder brother. Alas, even in these subaltern ranks the Sovereign's vigilance stepped in to spoil Maria Luisa's amusements, and the attractive Luis had in his turn to go a long way off.

The husband, meanwhile, saw nothing. When Ortiz was banished, he implored his father to recall so fine a fellow: 'Without him', he said, 'Maria Luisa is unhappy; he amuses her so'. And on Charles III trying one day to put him on his guard, he merely replied that princes were in little danger of wifely unfaithfulness, for princesses would certainly not go with men of inferior rank and men of their own were few and far between. Which provoked the King to reply: 'Charles, what a complete fool you are!' and in a lower tone: 'All of them alike – all of them whores!'

It has, however, been much debated whether the future Charles IV really was as blind as he always seemed or whether his obtuseness was the result of complaisance. The first hypothesis has, on the whole, found most acceptance. It is, all the same, somewhat improbable that, in a Court where the loves of the Princess, later Queen, were common gossip, her consort was the one person to be always completely in the dark. But we must bear in mind the meticulous precautions taken by Maria Luisa to keep

away from Charles's entourage anyone who might have had an interest in informing on her. Also in point are the extraordinary mental apathy of this worthy Prince and his passion for tranquillity: 'Above all, don't let Maria Luisa be annoyed!' Having said that, he was ready for every ignominy. And then again, may not a man who preferred the society of grooms and kennelmen to that of ladies have found his wife's ardours rather fatiguing and not been too displeased at her finding for them a counter-irritant whose true nature he had no mind to plumb? Credulity may be deliberate without for that reason being a feint, and, in the depths of his unconscious, a man will cunningly weave himself protecting screens which save him from seeing what he would rather not. In the end, nonchalance and delight met in Charles on the day when the object of Maria Luisa's favours became Manuel Godoy.



The young, quick-witted provincial had profited much by his early years of residence at Court. Not only had he become a brilliant soldier and an accomplished man of the world, but his mind had been improved and the range of his acquaintance broadened. A *camarista* – a housemaid of the Princess but a noble housemaid – whose lover he had become, trained him in polite usages; two young Frenchmen, the brothers Joubert, with whom he had formed a link, had taught him their language and given him a canter over the Encyclopaedists. From then on he had other weapons, besides a pink skin and a shapely leg, wherewith to realise his dreams of ambition.

How did Manuel get to know Maria Luisa? A choice can be made between the various stories that ran round Madrid at the time, none of which can be regarded as having much authority. Was he presented to her by the *camarista* and did he charm away her boredom by his talents as a guitarist, though in his *Memoirs* he denies ever having had such talents? Was he, less romantically, observed by her the time that he fell from his horse when his troop was filing past under her windows? Or was her attention called to the young man for the first time by the air of off-handed

indifference with which he dropped one day the miraculous statue which he had been ordered to carry in a procession? The evidence is lacking for all these stories, though all were told.

One thing is certain that, by reason of his duties, a bodyguard never lacked opportunity of meeting royalty. Nor should we forget that Luis, the elder brother, had already been favoured by the Princess, and it was natural enough for the mantle to descend on the younger. It is stated that, when Charles III's anger caused Luis to flee the Court without even time to say good-bye, the latter charged Manuel to lay at Maria Luisa's feet the expression of his despair and the oath of his fidelity, and that 'the messenger of love' acquitted himself of his task so gallantly that he at once succeeded his exiled brother. The anecdote is quite in keeping with the two persons concerned, and would even be probable, had not recent researches proved that the bodyguard who was our hero's immediate predecessor in the Princess's favours was not Luis at all but a man named Diego.

However it came about, Manuel now became Maria Luisa's lover. The young man had, no doubt, gifts as a groom of the bed-chamber, to which the partner of his joys, who was sixteen years older than himself, was not indifferent. But very soon the ageing woman found in this new affair of hers something other than the only delights which she had hitherto sought. Manuel became the master not of her body only but of her heart and mind. The wonderful lover became a cherished son as well, for whom nothing could be too much; he was her hero, whom she would always look on as the superior of everyone else, Napoleon included; he was her counsellor, the guide from whom she never swerved, whose opinions would to the very end receive a blind acceptance. The physical pleasure was in time to slacken. Godoy would not long remain the dazzling young cavalier of the first meeting with the Princess and would be still only thirty-six years old when Lady Holland could write of him: 'A big, strong, coarse man, with a bright-red complexion and a heavy, sleepy, sensual look'. And Maria Luisa would allow herself a number of passing fancies, for she was never to lose her taste for young bodies and youthful bodyguards; but till her dying breath she would own the moral

sway of the man who had become to her a cult, to whom she would write in 1804: 'The memory of you and your renown will end only with the world'; she would forgive him his infidelities, find him a wife, make welcome his dearest mistress and her children; and at the end, when she felt that death was near, she would name the incomparable Manuel her residuary legatee.

Did the man himself really love this adoring mistress? Probably not, for he was frivolous, foppish and fickle. What he first saw in her was, no doubt, a means of slaking his ambition and his thirst for money. That did not prevent him before long from vowing to her a sincere and enduring attachment. And later, when he was to follow her into exile, the reason would not only be to keep a place at table and a roof; also was it the fruit of a habit in which respect and tenderness still had a part.

The truth is that Manuel is hardly conceivable without Maria Luisa, or both of them without Charles. If not at once, then at any rate after quite a few years, the worthy husband with the dominating wife came to share his wife's admiration for the young man's transcendent qualities. More than that, he went, if possible, still further. Godoy pleased him, his flow of words amused him, his self-assurance reassured him, his fertile imagination filled him with admiration. Before long, and he would be literally unable to do without his wife's lover, who would become an intimate friend and a companion of his every moment; the gold and honours in his bestowal would not suffice for his enrichment and ennoblement; he would in effect surrender to him all power and all decision. When in 1808, at the height of the crisis at Bayonne, the wretched Charles IV (as he then was) terrorised, bewildered, hardly knowing what was happening to him, was to find himself forced by Napoleon to renounce his crown, all he would find to say to the terrible Emperor would be: 'Where is Manuel?'

Affection on this scale on the part of a deceived husband for the instrument of his misfortune did not pass without exciting a good deal of astonishment and many ill-natured remarks. At the Court of Madrid there were those who did not fail to whisper that Charles had always had a penchant for able-bodied men and

that there was perhaps more than met the eye in this curious friendship. Let us give Maria Luisa's husband the benefit of the doubt and take the charitable view that, open and kindly to a fault, this feeble successor of Charles the Fifth found a happiness made to his measure in the society of a man who not only guaranteed him marital tranquillity but freed him from cares of State for which he was unsuited. 'Every day', he was in the evening of his life to confide to Napoleon, 'wet or fine, winter or summer, I would go out after breakfast and, after hearing mass, go hunting up till one o'clock; immediately after dinner I would return to the hunting-field and stay there until dusk. In the evening Manuel would never fail to tell me whether things were going well or ill, and I would go to bed to start again the next day'. With tastes like that, how could he not feel attached to a man who enabled him to satisfy them?

At the start, however, Maria Luisa was not absolutely confident of her husband's liking the liaison. Mostly she feared her father-in-law's stern views. Up till then, she had found sufficient consolation on each successive exile of a lover in a hysterical flood of tears. But that Manuel might be taken from her – the thought was too much! We see her for that reason jealously concerned to hide from the public gaze, the King's especially, her new love. Distrust, suspicion, hired spies, sudden falls from favour: they grew like weeds in the neighbourhood of the Princess.



Meantime the aged Charles III was nearing the end of his ordered and melancholy life. He had been greatly afflicted when, in 1785, death had robbed him of his brother and hunting-companion, the Infante Don Luis; and his daughter-in-law's escapades had deepened his gloom. In October 1788, small-pox fetched down to the tombs of the Escorial – one after the other and within the space of a few days – the Infanta Maria Anna Victoria, the baby she had just borne and her husband, the Infante Gabriele, the King's favourite son from whose loss he never recovered.

In an effort to shake off his dismal thoughts, even though it involved modifying for once the invariable routine of his seasona

changes of residence, he went to La Granja to hunt: there, the autumn mists gripped his bronchial tubes. On his return to the capital he had to take to his bed and soon his condition was desperate. Though he had expelled the Jesuits from Spain, he was a pious man, and viewed the approach of death with Christian humility. When the Patriarch of the Indies, who was arch-chaplain of the Royal Palaces, asked him if he forgave his enemies, he answered: 'It did not need this extremity for me to forgive them. They were all of them forgiven in the moment of doing me injury'. And on his confessor inviting him to pray for his restoration to health, the sick man replied: 'That for which I pray is the salvation of my soul; my body's matters little'.

He made his confession, kissed the relics of Saint Isidore and Saint Diego, partook of the sacrament, received the *viaticum* with great firmness and commended to his successor the interests of religion. Then on 14th December 1788 at 12.40 a.m. he breathed his last.

A great-grandson of Louis XIV, with whom he had in common a lofty conception of the occupation of King, he had reigned for twenty-five years over the Two Sicilies and for twenty-nine over the Spains. Notwithstanding, or because of, his good qualities, few regretted him.

Some hours after his father's death, the Prince of the Asturias, now Charles IV, received the Ambassadors of the related monarchs and the leading Ministers of State. The new Queen was present at this audience, thereby establishing a precedent which was to last to the end.

Meanwhile, the mortal remains of the dead King had been placed on a catafalque; the public were admitted to defile before it, what time the Patriarch of the Indies and the clerks of the Chapel chanted the office of the dead. The following evening, that of 15th December, the body was placed in a coffin covered with cloth of gold; the Gentlemen of the Table and the Equerries carried the coffin down the palace steps and laid it in a coach draped in crêpe. Other coaches carrying the clergy and the undertakers went before and after.

On a cold night lit up with torches, between two lines of Span-

ish and Walloon soldiers carrying arms in reverse, the heavy coaches tottered along towards the Escorial. The bodyguards, their horses' hoofs clinking on the frozen ground, both headed the cortege and brought up the rear. Among them, riding in his file, was Manuel Godoy.

Movement was slow over a bumpy road; the bitter North wind, blowing off the Sierra de Guadarrama, cut like a knife. A halt had to be made at the squalid village of Gallapagar; the royal coffin was laid in the church, while the suite found the best accommodation that they could, more of them on straw than in beds.

Only at daybreak on the next day but one, 17th December, was the Escorial reached. The heavy gates of the monastery-palace were flung open and a procession of monks appeared, singing the *Miserere*. Mass was said by the Prior and the *Laudes* were sung, an icy cold filling the while the corridors of stone. Then the Gentlemen of the Chamber carried the bier down to the place of decay where the remains of the Kings of Spain and the Indies returned to dust. The squadrons of the bodyguards and the companies of grenadiers fired three salvoes of musketry. The passing-bell was tolled. The Captain of the guards broke his wand of command. Thereafter, though a few faithful souls stayed behind in the church to pray for the soul of Charles III, courtiers and soldiers alike returned to Madrid in the evening.

Upright on his horse, Manuel Godoy was among them. This melancholy day had held few unpleasant thoughts for him; rather, a vision of glory filled his eyes.

The way of ascent was now open to him.

## CHAPTER II

### *The Spain of Goya*

THE SPAIN that Manuel Godoy was shortly to rule was relatively prosperous. At the beginning of the century, the Bourbons had found her in an anaemic condition, still only half awakened from her dream of world domination, short of both men and goods by reason of unending wars, emigration and the low estimation in which manual labour was held – a nation of Don Quixotes tilting at windmills. The Bourbon princes, though they were hypochondriacal and quite without genius, knew how to pick their men; unobtrusively, without offending traditions or demanding any violent breaches with the past, they nursed the patient back to health. Trained in the methods grafted on France by Louis XIV's great breed of clerks, they turned their training to good account in the realm that was now theirs. This realm, they understood – or guessed unconsciously – was a convalescent and must as such be treated: very little war, certainty without oppression as to taxation; a paternal, even a paternalist, government; less of glory and more of prudent administration; the supersession of the sword by the pen.

The result was that, at the time of the death of Charles III, who was the third Bourbon King, the population of Spain, which had at the start of the century been a mere six million or so, had reached a figure of ten and a half million; that several good roads had taken the place of several mis-shapen tracks; that agriculture was progressing, and that trade, especially with America, was on the increase; that the navy was looking up; that the Treasury was no longer a continuous void; that education was beginning, slowly, to spread its wings; that, to conclude, most Spaniards could eat when they were hungry.

And that had all been achieved with very little force. Philip V, Duke of Anjou, had mounted the throne of the Catholic Kings not by conquest, but in virtue of the rights which he derived

from his grandmother, Louis XIV's wife, and in virtue of Charles II's will. He had suppressed the privileges of Aragon because Aragon had declared in favour of the Archduke, who was his rival for the Crown, but he had preserved the *fueros* – the liberties of the Basque provinces and Navarre; he had introduced certain principles of French administration because those principles had been tried in the fire, but he had respected the essential parts of the national institutions; most important of all, being himself a convinced Catholic, he had left entirely alone the usages of the somewhat spiky catholicism of Spain.

His successors – or their ministers – had followed in his footsteps; modifying, eroding, improving, but never breaking. His eldest son, Ferdinand, maintained under difficult conditions the neutrality of Spain. His second son, Charles III, had a reforming temperament and made some important changes; but, when he sought to ban the wearing of those wide-brimmed hats and those enormous capes, and his subjects revolted, he wisely threw over the Minister who had advised him. True, he banished the Jesuits from his dominions and quarrelled with the Vatican, but, at the same time, he respected the Holy Office and placed his kingdom under the protection of the Immaculate Conception: his subjects, who were fond of styling themselves 'more catholic than the Pope', found, as to most of them, nothing to complain of in that. He too it was who concluded with France the 'Family Compact', but with Spain's interests only in mind. 'Our existence at home and abroad', he wrote in this connection to the Junta of State, 'largely depends on our union and friendship with France, but we cannot be too careful to ensure that she does not drag us at her tail into wars by looking on us as her subaltern – France is, for Spain, the best of neighbours and allies, but she could also be her worst, most terrible and powerful enemy'. Notwithstanding Louis XIV's prophecy, the Pyrenees continued in being throughout the reign of his great-grandson in Spain.

During this period, the old administrative machine of the Spanish monarchy continued, as to its essential parts, to function. The King, 'whom God preserve', was still, as ever, the source of all legislation, all justice and all pardon, but his power was limited

by the obligation under which he lay to serve and defend the Catholic Church – loyal subjects though they were, the Spaniards would have rebelled instantly against a free-thinking Sovereign – and also by the traditional privileges of certain provinces, certain communities, certain classes and certain orders. Alongside the Royal Courts functioned the tribunals of the Inquisition which, though they no longer sent to the stake except in effigy, still exercised an often finicking control over morals and books; the Army and the Navy had their special *fueros* (privileges) to which they were much attached; the Basque provinces and Navarre were almost autonomous and paid only such taxes as they had freely agreed to – and their frontier for customs purposes ran not between themselves and France but between themselves and the rest of Spain. The Church had still fifteen per cent of the land of the country. And the ancient Orders of Chivalry – Alcantara, Calatrava, Saint James of Compostella and Montera – they too had, along with an autonomous administration, considerable landed property. The very numerous nobility also enjoyed extensive rights.

Within these limits, which he could touch only with great prudence, the King was absolute. The Cortes, composed of deputies from one part only of the realm, were, it is true, convoked from time to time, but their part was the limited one of taking oaths of loyalty and approving 'pragmatic' decrees of the King modifying the rules of succession to the throne. The Councils, which were a feature of the Hapsburg régime, were still there: Council of State, Royal Council of Castile, Chamber of Castile, Council of the Indies, Council of Finance, Supreme Council for War, Council of Admiralty, Council of the Orders; they still exercised, slowly and meticulously, the administrative and judicial functions, both of which they had; but their importance had in fact fallen as that of the Secretaries of State had grown. These last, who were in origin mere amanuenses of the royal command, had become ministers and heads of administration in the full sense. At the time of Charles III's death they numbered seven: the first, Secretary of State and of the *Despacho universal*, in other words Minister of Foreign Affairs; then the Minister of Pardons and

Justice; then one for War and another for the Navy; then two for the Indies; and, lastly, one for Finance. Grouped together in the 'Supreme Junta of State', they were, from 1787 onwards, the propulsive organ of government.

In each province the Sovereign was represented by a Captain-General who presided over the 'Audience', at once Court of Appeal and administrative Council. In the inferior administrative districts it was a *corregidor* (magistrate) who played simultaneously the parts of administrator and judge. The sale of judicial offices, which had sunk such deep roots in France, was not nearly as prevalent in Spain and the King kept his councillors, 'auditors' and *corregidores* well in hand. In imitation of their French cousins, however, the Spanish Bourbons had, except in the territories with special privileges (*fueros*), superimposed on the traditional magistracy intendants of their own who were the eyes and ears of the central Power.

This Power was perhaps less operative in the smaller administrative districts of towns and municipalities. There the authorities – *alcaldes* (mayors), *regidores* (aldermen), jurats – were often nominated by the seignior, the bishop or the abbey predominant in the locality; elsewhere these offices were in practice hereditary. In certain small villages it was the assembly of the people on Sunday after Mass, held on the square before the church, which took decisions of local interest; for more important communities Charles III created 'deputies of commons' and 'official trustees' who controlled the mayor's financial administration.

Institutions are worthless apart from folkways. Now, if the Spaniard will at need carry patriotism to the point of heroism, if he is capable of sacrificing his life for an idea, the civic sense as such is usually undeveloped in him; he is too much of an individualist for that. His interest in public affairs is limited to times of crisis; for the rest of the time, they are for him, if he is an intellectual, only material for theoretical speculations, and, if he is not, only a private preserve of the wiser or more fortunate.

The result of this state of mind was that at the end of the eighteenth century the mass of the people took no real interest in the efforts made by the government to draw Spain out of the rut

in which she had got stuck in the seventeenth. Certain officials, graduates of the less aristocratic colleges, were active, enterprising and 'friends to light'; others, more numerous, thought to advance their promotion by espousing the ideas of the reforming ministers. Some few great noblemen who had visited France and Britain returned to their native land affiliated to Masonry and imbued with the 'philosophic spirit'. Several writers – hacks more or less all of them – praised in prose or verse the official directives. There were students, even youthful ecclesiastics, who read, under cover from the Inquisition, the works, brought in illegally, of the French encyclopaedists. But, taken as a whole, the nation had little liking for innovations which it could label 'foreign'.

As against that, a narrow and intransigent Spanish nationalism made itself felt in places: at the start of the century men and women of noble family had given up their severe traditional dress in favour of modes from France: towards the end of it, there were those among them who took off – at any rate for a few hours – those modes and put on instead, not indeed their old black dresses now worn only by lawyers and duennas, but the short jacket of the Andalusian *majo* (man of fashion) or the flounced skirt of the *manola* (smart vulgarian) from Madrid. The public at large stayed away from the plays, imitated from the French, which it was sought to thrust down its throat at the official theatres. The Bourbon King was revered but, except in quite restricted circles, on condition that he forgot Versailles.



Looked at from the outside, Spanish society, at the time of Charles IV's accession, seemed strictly hierarchical and somewhat congealed.

At the top was the Royal Family, the Court, and the higher nobility. This higher nobility consisted of the *grandees* of Spain – in 1787 they numbered one hundred and nineteen – and of the *ennobled* – that is to say, dukes, marquesses, counts and barons of relatively recent creation; it was from this class, whose members addressed one another with the familiar 'tu' as a matter of

course, that the holders of the great Household Offices were recruited: for the King's Palace, the *Mayordomo-mayor* or Grand Master, the Butler of the Guard or Great Chamberlain, the Grand Equerry, the Majordomos, the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber and the Table, professional or honorary; for the Queen, the *Camarera-mayor* or Superintendant, the Ladies of the Palace and the Ladies of Honour (the *azafata* or first Lady of the Bedchamber usually came from the lesser nobility but she was feared because of her position). Many of the seigniors thus manacled to the Royal Household had vast domains in the provinces, which they called their 'States'; but they lived there seldom, preferring to follow the monarch on his changes of residence which, with clock-like regularity, took him from Madrid to Aranjuez, from Aranjuez to San Ildefonso, from there to the Escorial, and so back again to Madrid. Existence was, as we have seen, austere enough in these royal residences: it was a far cry from them to the pleasures of Versailles and, apart from hunting, almost the only forms of lawful diversion were the gala 'kissings of hands' and the receptions of ambassadors, with an occasional procession extraordinary or State baptism, and, most exceptionally, a tournament or concert.

The Court trailed along with it a vast crowd of officials, chaplains, servants, grooms, huntsmen, labourers, and purveyors of every kind and rank. Every day, two hundred and fifty people were kept busy by the royal hunting, and on days of special slaughter two thousand were employed on it. The maintenance of this vast retinue cost the Royal Treasury nearly seventy thousand *reals*, or one-tenth of the public revenue; in anticipation of the day, always put off, when the decision would be taken to cut this expenditure seriously, the Court remained a world of its own, but an enclosed world where the ferments of intrigue and calumny found the richest of culture mediums.

After the Court – in the nation's eye, perhaps, before it – came the clergy: they reached, in 1787, the large figure of nearly two hundred thousand souls, of whom about sixty-two thousand were monks and nearly thirty-three thousand were nuns. Collectively, the monastic Orders were very rich, but they were charitable

too and, as individuals, their members were poor. For this reason, monks and nuns achieved greatest popularity when they belonged to the mendicant orders; from these orders were recruited the preachers who, like Diego of Cadiz, the Capuchin, could hold crowds spell-bound – crowds whose mysticism sometimes verged on hysteria. (This Brother Diego, who was credited with miraculous gifts, pushed intransigence to such a point that he was denounced to the Holy Office ‘for his exaggerated exaltation of the pontifical authority, of the powers of the Holy Inquisition and of the perfection of the religious state, as well as by reason of the excessive severity with which he preaches against the abandoned unbelievers’). As for the secular clergy, jokes were sometimes made about the liking for good cheer and the easy morals of some of its members, but they were in the main held in respect, and any Spanish family, whatever its status, felt honoured when ‘His Reverence’ the priest or curate deigned to call on it for a cup of chocolate. In any case, in this family there would generally be an ecclesiastical uncle or brother-in-law, who was counted on for the marriages of the daughters and for looking after the education of the boys. It must be added that, for Spaniards, catholicism was not only a matter of religious belief, it was also one of patriotism; at the end of the eighteenth century, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception or the truth of the apparition of Saint James on the battlefield of Clavijo got themselves defended with the same fiery passion as was brought in earlier times to throwing the Moors out of the peninsula, and as would soon be brought to harrying the French.

Next came the nobility, not the nobility of the Court (considered earlier), but that far more numerous one which swarmed over the provinces. The count of 1787 disclosed the existence of some half million *hidalgos* – one gentleman, in other words, in every twenty Spaniards. A *hidalgo* was in essence a man who could prove himself of ‘old Christian’ stock, with no admixture of Jewish, Moorish or Gipsy blood, and, in addition, without his ancestors having lost caste by following some degrading occupation. Large numbers of people could claim to satisfy these conditions; all the inhabitants of the Biscayan province had titles of

nobility and very many Asturians had them too. But nobility is one thing and wealth quite another, and many of the *hidalgos* were as poor as Job. Sometimes – the supreme humiliation this – they were reduced to following a manual trade. But in that case they took care to choose one which would not lose them too much caste. Casanova, who travelled across Spain in Charles III's reign, knew a *hidalgo* who was a cobbler and consented to patch his soles, but who would not for anything in the world have agreed to make a pair of shoes and take the measurements of his customers' feet. Most of the noble families kept going thanks to the institution of inalienable *mayorats* (entails) which enabled the eldest son to lead an honorable existence at the head of the family and bear the coat of arms. These entails of real estate, which comprised, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, more than one-third of the soil of Spain, were regarded by the economists of the time as a calamity: in effect, they withdrew from active trading a large part of the agricultural land, encouraged idleness, prevented industrious peasants from owning their own farms and put younger sons on the street with no means of livelihood. There was much truth in these criticisms, but it is, all the same, impossible not to admire a certain type of Spanish *mayorazgo* (first-born son), uncouth as the soil to which heredity had tied him, thrifty in general but sumptuous when occasion called, unpolished but courteous, hard on his share-croppers but generous to the poor, spilling his gold and sometimes his blood somewhat at random (just as he got his bastards), doing a deal with God and loving the Virgin.

The Spanish nobility did not enjoy the fiscal privileges held by the French nobility, but it was they who furnished the higher cadres of the Army – an army which did not number more than sixty thousand men, not including twenty-five thousand provincial militiamen, but in which officers abounded – and of the Navy, which, though still imposing, was poorly equipped; it was from their ranks that most of the high officials both in Spain herself and in the colonies were recruited; it was they too who, with some exceptions, furnished the Courts with the race of *golillas* – men in white bands – namely, the judges, advocates and attorneys who peopled them; lastly, it was they who provided

all those *pretendientes* (go-betweens) who cumbered the ante-chambers of ministers and the other great.

Also members of the noble caste were, in general, the tribe of fashionable idlers whose chatter filled the capital with noise and whom authors of the time, such as Ramon de la Cruz or Jovellanos, were for ever putting in their plays. These people were called *petimetres* or *petimetras*, from the French 'petit maître' and 'petite maîtresse'; and their taste for French fashions amused, and sometimes annoyed, the traditionalists. They wore, or thought they wore, Paris clothes: their furthest concessions to native taste were that the *petimetre* sometimes replaced the frock-coat by a cape and the *petimetra* consented, on going out, to cover her complicated coiffure with a mantilla and to put on an outer skirt of dark colour over her skirt below. Both were for ever on the look out for the latest affectations in gait, dancing, expression, use of perfume, taking snuff, quizzing, sighing and making love. His progress in exquisiteness continuing, the *petimetre* ended up, towards the end of the century, as the *currutaco* (dandy), a pendant to the French *incroyable*: the *currutaco* is inimitable; he does not walk, he bounds; he does not talk, he twitters; he does not take food, he sucks sugared almonds or sips elixirs; he is pure spirit, a sylph; his is a figure which, in the surrounding Spanish gravity, is wholly ridiculous.

As everyone in reasonably easy circumstances claimed to be a *hidalgo* and generally made his claim good with the help of a few bisques, there was in Spain, at the end of the eighteenth century, hardly any upper *bourgeoisie* in the true sense. There was, however, to be found a certain number of successful merchants who had not been able to prove the indispensable quarterings and had to resign themselves to leaving the facades of their houses bare of coats of arms. They strained to get their sons into the universities – or into those at least of the colleges which were not the preserve of the nobles. Under Ferdinand VI and Charles III, who, like their great-grand sire, Louis XIV, used as a matter of policy people of low birth, these sons sometimes came to occupy administrative positions of the highest importance. But business in a big way was, largely, in the hands of foreigners: at Cadiz alone were

seventy-nine thousand French businessmen.

As to the small *bourgeoisie* – tradesmen, masters of workshops, clerks, chemists, the lower grades in the service of the Courts and the administration – they had virtually no social importance. Lovers of religion and tradition, they formed a reserve for the future. In addition, the members of it, who often owned small country properties, were not always clearly distinguishable from countrymen.

The people – *el comun* – comprised artisans, workmen and unskilled labourers, domestics and the peasantry.

At the time of the accession of Charles IV large-scale industry had not yet made its appearance in Spain. The few major factories that existed were, except in the case of arms factories, partly staffed by foreign workers; Spaniards tend to dislike work of a very regular kind which requires a team; they prefer the small-scale crafts which, if they are somewhat unremunerative, leave ample leisure. Really hard work and labour in the mines are deliberately left to the Galicians and the Asturians, who are rough and energetic peoples. Whenever he could, the Madrileño, the Toledan or the Sevillian entered the service of a noble house: in 1787, there were two hundred and eighty thousand domestics in Spain as against only three hundred and ten thousand workmen. The greatness of a family was measured by the number of its lackeys and servants; from this followed a tribe of serving-men, very badly paid, with not much to do, and, often, very disorderly.

This urban proletariat – to which should be added the honourable and honoured class of beggars – had its own codes, its own traditions and its own ways of talking and dressing. It had, besides, its elegants, namely, the *majo* and the *maja* (the flashy people of both sexes), who were generally called *manolo* and *manola* at Madrid. If the eyes of the *petimetre* and the *petimetra* were turned towards France, the *majo* and his female analogue prided themselves on being Spanish to the core. The *majo* showed it by the hair-net covering his hair, the short page-boy jacket, the large, brightly-coloured sash which held the *navaja* (jack-knife), the tight-fitting breeches garnished with filigree-work, the vast, all-engulfing cape; the *maja* showed it by the raised comb holding

the mantilla on high, the trimmings on the shoulders, the short skirt with wide flounces, the pointed shoes setting off the tiny feet, the poignard in the garter. Excitable, credulous, passionate, ever passing rapidly from one excess to the next, never unready to turn their arms to use, loving dance and song and blood – they were for all that rather fascinating.

But, notwithstanding the pictures and comedies of the period, it would be wrong to think of Spain at the end of the eighteenth century as peopled entirely by *petimetres* and *majos*. Then, as today, Spain's essence was the peasant – that rude and laborious Spanish peasant whose greatness Miguel de Unamuno has worthily hymned: 'A breed of men like vine-shoots, grilled by the sun and tanned by the frosts; a temperate breed of men, product of an age-long selection made by the cold of the hardest winters and periodical famines; a breed of men made for inclemency of sky and bareness of life. The Spanish peasant is calm in all his movements, his conversation is deliberate and grave. You might think him an unthroned king . . .'.

This peasantry, which accounted for half of the population of the country, owned but a fragment of its soil. Often, especially in the Castiles and Andalusia, the peasant was a mere day labourer (in the province of Seville there were nearly one hundred and twenty thousand day labourers as against five thousand peasant proprietors) who was, when the great seasonal toils were over, plunged into penury for long months. No matter: his consolation was to repeat some of the racy proverbs which were his entire stock of literary equipment and to think on God's providence. His brother, the fisherman of the Cantabrian or Mediterranean coasts, was hardly less a fatalist. The sea and the Castilian plains made, beyond question, for the same type of reverie.

Seen from the outside, as was said above, this social hierarchy had a starched appearance. Seen from within, it seemed much limper, for its rigidity was corrected by the simple good nature of the upper classes and by the dignity of the lower – both of them features of Spain. The King addressed his subjects by the familiar 'tu'; *hidalgo* and beggar called one another 'Your grace'. All were Christians, that is to say, brothers in Jesus Christ. Those only

were beyond the pale of respect who were, or were suspected of being, outside the true faith: heretic foreigners, gipsies, half-converted Jews from Majorca. Useless for government to pass laws in their favour – tradition was stronger: these reprobates were outside catholicism, therefore outside society.

Nor were there any essential differences between the ways of life of the different classes. Apart from the very rich and the very poor, apart also from those – on the whole quite a small number – who imitated French ways of life, all Spaniards alike had similar outlooks. All had the same contempt for comfort – the house of the *hidalgo*, like that of the peasant, had in it only a few tables, beds and wooden seats; the walls were nearly bare and the *brasero* (brazier) was, most often, the only means of heating. All had the same frugality – the *puchero*, the *pot-au-feu*, formed the background of the national dietary, though the better-off indulged as well in the delights of cinnamon chocolate. All got up early – the Council of Castile took their seats at eight in the morning in winter and at seven in summer – all retired for the siesta in the afternoon. All went to Mass almost every day – agricultural labourers were assured of a dawn-time service before setting off for the fields. Everyone was to be found met together in pilgrimages and processions, also at bull-fights. This country where there were so many nobles was one of the most truly democratic in the world.

★ ★ ★

The Spain of Charles IV had a stroke of fortune which has made her immortal: a great painter fixed for posterity not only the features of her Sovereigns, her leading men and her fashionable women, but also the daily aspect of her streets, her squares, her countryside, her places of amusement and desolation. Best of all, he fixed with a brush of magic her people's soul.

That great painter was Goya.

Francisco Goya y Lucientes was born on 30th March 1746, when Philip V, Louis XIV's grandson, was still on the throne, at Fuente de Todos in Aragon. His father had been a master-gilder at Saragossa, where he seems to have thriven in a modest way, who had then settled down in the country on a small farm;

his mother came of a family which may have been noble but was certainly ruined.

The child grew up on a buffeted soil, at once wild and fertile, through which the torrents which come down from the Pyrenees had driven deep ravines. Every day, in a wind that seemed sometimes off a glacier and sometimes off a furnace, he went wandering, filling his eyes with the hard, pure light which, according to the season and the time of day, coloured with changing tints the far-off mountains, the undulating prairies on which fed the sheep, the beds of the streams at one time dry and at another charged with rushing waters, and the villages seeming a piece of the rocky slopes to which they clung.

A monk took notice of this hardy urchin who played with bulls and dashed off sketches on the walls with charcoal. He put him into the *Escuela pia* at Saragossa where he was taught the A.B.C., the four rules of arithmetic and the rudiments of drawing. Francisco, whose orthography was to remain to the end an uncertain quantity, raved about his pencils and dreamed of a palette. After some years, he went off to Saragossa to the house of Luzan, a painter of some repute, and enrolled himself at his school, which was a good one. He was at that time a turbulent, full-blooded, quarrelsome youth, none too chaste, but he worked steadily when he had to.

At seventeen he found his province a prison and set off – doubtless on foot – for the capital, where he picked up Bayeu, an acquaintance made at Luzan's studio, whose pictures were beginning to sell and whose sister he would, later, marry.

What was the young Goya's life at Madrid like? Many are the legends about it, but none is proven. Fights with jack-knives, liftings of skirts, clashes with the Holy Office; all that is possible, even probable; nothing is certain. But the mind's eye easily discerns the artist-apprentice, broad-backed and snuffing the wind, leaving the studio, his book of sketches in his pocket, and wandering the streets in search of a scene to sketch, a good joke to play, a savoury morsel to seduce, a pretty chin to chuck.

Here he is of a morning, on the *Plaza Mayor*, a seething marketplace, where hucksters of both sexes offer their goods to a loud

accompaniment of shouts, altercations and parrot cries, while the piles of oranges and pimentos collapse, while hens and turkeys squall as they tumble over, while the sing-song voices of the blind indulge complaints which constitute a very news-sheet of speech.

A little later, at the fashionable hour – from midday to two o'clock – he goes to the Puerta del Sol where the *petimetres* are cutting a dazzling figure and where, from time to time, some *petimetra* or other, with her *cortejo* (*cicisbeo*) at her side, deigns to be seen; there, around the fountain of Mariblanca, the water-carriers are at work, while, a few paces off, beneath the porch of the convent of San Felipe el Real, are idlers, tale-bearers, priests without a parish, officers without a troop, officials without an office, middlemen of every kind and women of doubtful reputation – all chattering their hardest; Goya, we may be sure, enjoys mingling with this throng.

After a hurried meal and the afternoon siesta, he goes off to the Prado, the famous promenade then in process of being laid out, re-designed and replanted: it is the evening rendezvous of the whole of Madrid; drawn by mules and escorted by outriders, the heavy coaches of the aristocracy, with gorgeous footmen clinging on behind, succeed each other in an uninterrupted line; on each side of the roadway a double wave of pedestrians keeps alongside them; strings of laughing girls go by, showing a good deal of face behind their mantillas; the young men quiz them and in passing let off a few daring compliments; families take the air with an appearance of consequence; beggars crave alms with an air of hauteur; there is a sound of songs punctuated by guitars; on an isolated patch of grass are games of blind-man's buff and a launching of kites; a *majo* and a *maja*, facing each other, do a dance, with the help of castanets and thigh-slappings – a voluptuous *fandango* or a *bolero*, more voluptuous still. But now the bells ring out: it is the angelus. As by enchantment, silence descends, gestures are frozen in the act of their making, heads are bent: nothing is now heard but the murmur of *Ave Maria*. Immediately after, the hubbub starts afresh and lasts till well after nightfall.

What does Goya do on leaving the Prado? Perhaps he goes to the play, either at the La Cruz theatre or the theatre del Principe, engaged as one of the *claque* by the party of the ChORIZOS or by the rival party of the POLACOS. Perhaps he stops a moment in a *botilleria* (bar) to drink a cup of hipocras or rosali while skimming the last number of the *Gaceta* or the *Diario noticioso*. Perhaps, with some other gay sparks, he goes to one of the masked balls made fashionable, in the likeness of Paris, by Count Aranda, and there, behind the domino, rubs shoulders with Casanova. Perhaps, guided by an older man, he puts in an appearance at a *tertulia* – a reception – where, if the refreshments are not lavish, the conversation is interesting. Perhaps, if it is the season, he visits the fair held on the Plazuela de la Cebada, where all the stylishness of Madrid goes to be seen. More certainly, for at his age love is a cheap amusement, he goes off, through streets which are lit badly or not at all, to pick up, under the very beard of a jealous husband or suspicious brother, some *manola* generous with her favours.

One thing is sure: he never misses a bull-fight. These fights had, originally, an aristocratic character and it was mainly the gentry who, mounted on spirited horses, took their pleasure in bull-sticking. But Philip V, brought up in the elegant amusements of Versailles, had small liking for these sanguinary combats, and the nobles stopped taking part in them. Thereafter it was plebeians and professionals who played the leading part in the arena: bull-fighting gained thereby in popularity and also became a more exact science with more closely defined rules. When Goya made his first stay in Madrid, the two *toreros* who were the people's idols were two Andalusians, Juan Romero and Castillares. A *corrida* in those days lasted for an entire day, six bulls being killed in the morning and six in the afternoon; towards the end, amateurs were permitted to go down into the arena and exercise their skill at peril of their lives; the young painter was, no doubt, often to be one of them – he who in later life would sometimes sign his letters to his friend Zapater 'Francisco de los toros'.

Amid all these amusements and notwithstanding, probably, a

somewhat dissolute life, Goya, who will be a good catholic to his death, does not forget his religious duties. He goes to church, confesses and communicates. No doubt, too, the future painter of the Miracle of Saint Anthony of Padua and of the Flagellants is often present from choice at the open-air sermons and processions at which his compatriots find the wherewithal to satisfy their piety, their love of show and, on occasion, their taste for blood. We can almost see Goya painting it, that contemporary scene described by Bourgoing, Chargé d'Affaires at the French Embassy, in which is a young girl 'of gentle manners, amiable and of cheerful disposition' who appears one Good Friday 'wearing an air of festival in her looks and dressed in a robe of dazzling whiteness'. 'It was the moment', Bourgoing continues, 'when the flagellants were to pass down her quarter, and she awaited them impatiently. They came in view at last. She draws near her window which was on the level of the street and separated from it only by some iron bars. The flagellants stop before her and flog each other. In an instant she is covered with the blood which spurts from their shoulders. She seemed to find pleasure in seeing her clothes soaked in so terrible a dew.' The young woman's lover was one of the self-chosen victims.

Everywhere blood, pleasure and death; and that is one aspect of the work of Goya.

In 1767, the year of Manuel Godoy's birth, the budding painter was still far from the 'Disasters of War', far even from the *Caprichos*. But already he was inconstant and restless. Was this his native disposition? Or were differences with the police responsible? Or was it merely that at that time a pilgrimage to Italy formed part of every true artist's education? Whatever the answer, he decided to leave Madrid and go to Rome. That he had no money to pay for the journey mattered little: he got himself engaged in a *cuadrilla* (troop) of toreadors, and with these companions, whose picturesqueness was much to his taste, he journeyed from one arena to the next till he reached his port of embarkation.

Of his stay in the Eternal City almost nothing is known. Stories have come down of convent walls scaled, of a nun re-

moved, of brushes with the pontifical police (*sbirri*) – a second edition, in short, of the Madrid legends. What is certain is that Francisco did not forget that he had come to study the great exemplars and that he studied them conscientiously.

In 1770 he was back in Spain, but, thinking it difficult to get his foot in at Madrid, he settled down first at Saragossa in his native province. The Carthusian monks of the *Aula Dei* had not forgotten their little 'Francho', and they got him to cover the walls of the monastery with a 'Life of the Virgin Mary'. These eleven canvases were a success, the fame of the young painter grew, and soon he returned to Madrid, where patrons of the arts acclaimed him and where he married the sister of Bayeu, his old fellow-pupil, now become a member of the Academy of Fine Arts.

In 1776, thanks to his brother-in-law, he received the order to do cartoons for tapestries to be woven at the Royal Works. He was to work at this series of sketches for fifteen years, fixing for ever for posterity's delight, in design of a most supple fancy and in colours of an astounding gaiety, those rural and city scenes of which he had been the well-amused spectator – when he had not had a fiery hand in them. Meanwhile, he did not neglect the masters and made it a rule to reproduce in engraving some of the fairest canvases of him whom he reckoned the greatest of all painters, Velasquez.

In the Spain of the end of the eighteenth century there was a taste for the fine arts, and Goya soon achieved, if not celebrity, at any rate notoriety. Orders for portraits came flowing in, portraits of grand seigniors, portraits of fashionable women; the Infante don Luis himself, youngest son of Charles III, asked Goya to paint him surrounded by his family. The great moment came at last when he was admitted into the society of the Duchess of Alba.

In 1780, Maria Pilar Cayetana de Silva Alvarez de Toledo, twelfth Duchess of Alba, was the most elegant woman – the most conspicuous too no doubt – in Madrid. Eighteen years of age, born of an illustrious family, daughter of the witty Duchess of Huescar who had been the mistress of the celebrated Mora (the Mora of *Julie de Lespinasse*), immensely rich, married to a hus-

band whose passion was music, Maria Pilar sent all heads spinning.

Was she pretty? Not exactly perhaps, with her pallid complexion, her thin lips, her great wondering eyes, her huge head of black hair and her affected gestures. In Goya's portraits of her she seems a little stiff, a doll rather than a woman, with something childish and enigmatic about her. But this cold exterior hid a sparkling wit and a passionate heart. A spoilt child, nothing was too good for her, nothing too difficult, nothing could resist her. Her chateau at Piedrahita, in the province of Avila, was, after those of the Sovereigns, the most sumptuous in Spain; her villa at Barrameda, near Cadiz, was a thing of enchantment; at Madrid she had built for her the palace of Buenavista to be the most elegant in the capital; she was to inherit the little 'folly' of the Moncloa, on the banks of the Manzanares, and make of it a miracle of slightly meretricious grace, with its porcelains in the Pompeian style, its silks, its stuccos, its loggia and its airy bedroom the recess of which was adorned with a still-life picture representing night. Alas! the civil war of our time was to smash this toy.

In these lovely settings the Duchess spent her time surrounded by a court of grand seigniors, men of letters, painters and musicians. She wore the prettiest clothes in the world and the Parisian modistes had orders to send her all their novelties. And then, from time to time, she would leave it all and go away, incognita, dressed as a *maja*, to inflame *toreros* in training for a *corrida* or dance the *bolero* at some popular entertainment.

She caused scandal, but she did not care; she was credited with lovers, she did not contradict; women hated her, she was glad to hear it; when first she started to attract Goya, she was mainly concerned to annoy the Countess of Benavente, her rival in elegance, who had posed as the painter's protectress.

Suddenly, between the brash young man from Aragon and the whimsical aristocrat, the spark passed. He admired her and she was amused by him; in short, they pleased each other. As a start, she had him paint her seated, wearing a plumed hat and holding in one hand an enormous key. Was it the key to her

heart? Doubtless, and Goya quickly learned to turn it.

The intimacy took shape. The little Duchess would visit the artist in his studio. She would in time ask him to make her up, and he would do it, swearing that he would sooner paint on flesh than on canvas. Did these flirtatious trifles reach a more definite consummation? It is hard to say and anyhow it does not really matter. The important thing is to note that, when he takes possession of the full heritage of his talent, Goya, the most Spanish of men, lives in the orbit of the most Spanish of women.

This was the time of Godoy's appearance at Court as an ordinary bodyguard. He was then two years older than Bonaparte, twenty-one years younger than Goya, and five years younger than the Duchess of Alba; he was soon to preside over the disappearance, under Bonaparte's pressure, of an old and gracious Spain whose visionary genius was Goya, whose provoking loveliness the Duchess.

## CHAPTER III

### *The Ascent*

‘CASTILLA! CASTILLA! – For our lord, King Charles IV.’

Such was the traditional cry which, on 17th January 1789, the day of the proclamation of the new reign, the grand hereditary Standard-Bearer of the realm, the Marquess d’Astorga, surrounded by a glittering train of heralds-at-arms, grandees of Spain, alguazils and bodyguards, uttered from the balcony of the *ayuntamiento* (city hall) of Madrid.

‘Castilla! Castilla! – For King Charles IV.’ That was the cry – sometimes in the changed form of ‘Castilla and Aragona’ or ‘Castilla and Navarra’ – which was repeated by the *corregidores* and *alcaldes* on the principal squares of every town in the land; and would soon be repeated across the ocean in the cities of New Spain, New Granada, Peru and the Rio de la Plata. And everywhere the crowds, clapping their hands and waving handkerchiefs and fans, made answer:

‘Long live the King, whom God preserve!’

The cry showed that monarchical fervour was everywhere strong in those old Spains whom the new currents of thought, which, starting in France, were soon to turn Europe into a bear-garden, had hardly touched – the Spains who still hedged the throne, as though it were an altar, with a passionate respect.

Then too the Spanish people loved fetes and ceremonies. The dead King had been miserly with them, and the official mourning which had followed his death had plunged public life into a yet deeper gloom. The present wearer of the crown was still a young man, married to a wife whom all knew to be lively and pleasure-loving. The partisans of the Jesuits, who had not forgiven Charles III his persecution of the Order of Ignatius, joined their hopes to those of the nobility and the common people. Pardons, remissions of taxation, distributions of titles and decorations, military promotions, all increased the general satisfaction. The



CHARLES III OF SPAIN  
(1716-88)  
by Goya, in the Prado, Madrid



*Anderson, Rome*

QUEEN MARIA LUISA, WIFE OF CHARLES IV  
(Died, 1819)  
by Goya, in the Prado, Madrid

official festivities to celebrate the accession, which took place a little later – the Parisians had in the interval stormed the Bastille – were days of unalloyed rejoicing. Not a discordant note was heard. A royal procession through the streets of the capital, *corridas*, illuminations, fireworks, military parades, receptions at great houses, popular dances – everything went off well. And when the Cortes met to take the oath and to settle the order of succession to the Crown, it was with one voice and one heart that the deputies – how different from those even then assembling in the hall of the Tennis Court at Versailles! – cried aloud:

‘Long live Charles IV!’

Had they but known it, they were in effect crying: ‘Long live Godoy!’

★ ★ ★

In the early days of the reign, the young man – he was only just twenty-two – stayed in the shadows; it satisfied him to get himself made an ‘exempt’, or substitute commander, of the guards, thereby achieving the rank of colonel; only a few courtiers knew the full extent of his ascendancy over the new Queen. At the same time the Queen did not yet feel completely assured of her husband’s complaisance. She distrusted everything and everyone, foreigners especially, surrounded herself with spies and disappointed those who hoped for a gayer official world. Zinovieff, the Russian Ambassador, wrote:

‘Never has the Court been so gloomy. Suspicion is everywhere, and there are no more grand receptions. Everyone is afraid of appearing at Court in case he should meet with disgrace on a mere surmise. The diplomatic corps lives in a sort of quarantine’.

The reason? Love likes darkness!

Maria Luisa had other reasons too for feeling uneasy. She was not growing more beautiful. The same Zinovieff drew of her, about this time, a far from flattering picture:

‘Many confinements, several illnesses and what is, perhaps, the germ of a more or less hereditary disease have completely wrecked her. Her skin is greenish, and the loss of several teeth, replaced by false ones, has given the coup de grâce to her outward appearance.

The King himself has noticed it, and often tells her, jokingly it is true, that she is ugly and getting old.'

Manuel does not, perhaps, say it; but he certainly thinks it. A heart-breaking affair! To no purpose does the Queen dress more and more girlishly; sometimes a glimmer of repulsion lights the eyes of her lover of twenty-two – and she sees it.

However, people on thrones cannot be thinking of love always. They have to govern. In this sphere, Maria Luisa did not at first take much initiative. Before dying, Charles III had asked his heir to keep on his ministers; the heir, having in any case small taste for innovations, obeyed him, and the Queen let things be.

The leading Minister was, and had been for the last thirteen years, José Moñino, born of a family of lawyers' underlings, but a *hidalgo* and created Count of Floridablanca. Small and thin, with an air that was at once stern and rather common, he was a black-letter lawyer, trained amid the dossiers of the Council of Castile. Spanish to the marrow and deeply patriotic, he had an innate sense of the needs and possibilities of his country. Viewed with disfavour by the nobility, the military caste and a section of the clergy, but supported by the King, he had set in motion, courageously but rather heavy-handedly, a series of reforms which, had they been carried to a conclusion, could have got Spain out of the rut in which she had been stuck since Philip II. But, exposed as he was to the continual intrigues of his enemies, of, most of all, his predecessor, the aged Count of Aranda, leader of the Aragonese party, he was already thinking of retiring before Charles III's death. Devotion, but also a taste for power, were to cause him to serve Charles IV for another two years – too long a time for his interest; but he was already only a shadow of his old self.

Most important was that he was not relied on by Charles IV as he had been by Charles III. True, the old Minister received the confidence of the new Sovereign – who did not? – but this confidence was a distant, almost an indifferent, thing. And the Queen, behind whom was the hand of Godoy anxious to get himself a train of clients, had free rein to require of Floridablanca money in any quantity and favours galore for those whom she protected.

In the domestic sphere, Floridablanca continued, but with diminished assurance, the policies of the previous reign. Such were: temporary admission of foreign corn, removal of certain articles from the prohibited list for export, obstacles opposed to the formation of entails – all of them steps along the path of wisdom. Others of his measures were more questionable, such as the banning of theatrical entertainments in private houses, the banning of mixed dancing lessons, and, lastly, the ban on riding a trotting horse in the streets of Madrid.

In the foreign sphere, the Minister's energies had soon to be focused on events in France. The basis of Spanish foreign policy was at that time the Family Compact which had, from 1761 onwards, joined together the various ruling branches of the Bourbon house. Though a political alliance, it was also an affair of cousinship, in which ties of blood were crossed with ties of State. And now what was happening in Paris? It looked as though an attempt was afoot – unheard of innovation! – to dissociate, in the King, the private individual and the head of the executive authority. How could the principles on which the Family Compact rested possibly be reconciled with those inspiring the men of the Constituent Assembly?

The French Ambassador to Madrid was at that time the Duke of La Vauguyon, a grand seignior, with an intimate knowledge of his Court and a friend of 'enlightenment'. He did his best to persuade Charles IV and his ministers that Louis XVI's crown was still intact. Charles IV, who, though the events in France had profoundly shocked him, had no great understanding of what they were about, would have proved easy to persuade. But Floridablanca was becoming more and more alarmed over the revolutionary propaganda now beginning to make its way into Spain.

Spain's was not a promising soil for it. The overwhelming mass of the Spanish people was too religious, too attached to its own traditions and, if you like, too ignorant, to be seduced by the new ideas. Yet there were in Spain certain intellectual circles, associated with Freemasonry and narrowly watched by the Holy Office, which drank in eagerly the new

Evangel preached in Paris. Those circles were in constant correspondence with the 'Thinkers' Societies' beyond the Pyrenees and welcomed their emissaries. The danger was not a pressing one, but there could be no doubt as to its reality.

The French émigrés, already in Spain in considerable numbers, did not fail to underline the gravity of the situation. The Count of Artois had an agent at Madrid, M. de Vassé, who neglected nothing to galvanise the Spanish Cabinet into action.

On a *priori* grounds nothing would have pleased that Cabinet better than action. But it had to take into account its sinews of action. Of these the most important one, money, was woefully deficient: in spite of the regular arrival of piastres from the Indies, the national budget was in chronic deficit. This it was sought to remedy by advances from the only credit establishment in the country, the Bank of Saint Charles. But the now growing anxiety started to show itself in heavy withdrawals of bank deposits; the Bank was obliged to defer its dates of payment and to curtail its credit facilities to the Treasury. This last meant that the execution of public works had to be suspended and payment of service pay postponed. Specie went underground. In short, a crisis – and one which impeded all effective action abroad.

In the midst of all this came the affair of Nootka Sound.

The little bay of Nootka is situated in the island of Vancouver on the Western seaboard of North America, a zone always regarded as in the Spanish sphere of influence. But the English had, in 1785, established there a godown for the fur trade. The Spaniards stood aghast and seized without more ado the British ships. The English were furious, and William Pitt, their young Prime Minister, was not one to treat his country's commercial interests as a laughing matter. Complaints were addressed to Madrid, and, to back them up, part of the English fleet was mobilised. War seemed on the cards – one which would catch Spain on the wrong foot, for she could only put sixty ships in line, whereas England, it was said, had more than twice that number available.

Very naturally, the Spanish Cabinet bethought it of claiming the help that was due to Spain from France in virtue of the Family Compact. M. de La Vauguyon, having been sounded, trans-

mitted to Paris the appeal of Madrid.

At Paris, however, the mere name of the Family Compact was enough to ensure it a poor reception. La Vauguyon was dubbed a reactionary and received letters of recall. The National Assembly referred the question to a diplomatic committee whose first finding was that a National Compact must be substituted for the Family Compact. The agents maintained in France by Pitt did their utmost to sow discord, and the thing hung fire. In the end the Court of Madrid, despairing of any effective support from France, treated with the English Court and agreed to pay an indemnity. The Franco-Spanish alliance, so long the English nightmare, for practical purposes was dead.

More and more alarmed, Floridablanca next took energetic steps to counter the agents of subversive propaganda: by an order of 20th July 1791 all foreigners residing in Spain were obliged to swear fidelity both to the King and to the catholic religion. The frontier was closed to French newspapers and publications. Marquet d'Urtubise, put in by the French government as *Chargé d'Affaires* to manage the embassy after La Vauguyon's recall, had every possible obstacle put in the way of the accomplishment of his mission. Many Frenchmen were expelled from the country. Following the seizure of Louis XVI at Varennes, the Court of Madrid sent to the National Assembly a declaration exhorting the French to respect the liberty, the dignity and the person of their Sovereign. Lastly, the Spanish government, on being notified of the ratification of the new French constitution, said in reply that it had been extorted from Louis XVI, and added:

'It would be a great mistake to suppose that foreign powers have no right to take a hand in these events because they are the domestic affair of France. War against France would accord no less with the Law of Nations than one waged against criminals and rebels who usurp authority and make their own the goods of others'.

^ The National Assembly took note of this declaration: it did no more than 'pass to the order of the day'.

This mildness was due to the fact that those in charge at Paris

had no desire to break with Spain, to whom, at the start of 1792, they sent a new diplomatic agent, with the title of Envoy Extraordinary. This was M. de Bourgoing, a clever and clear observer, whose mission it was to explain to the Court of Madrid that the best way to protect the person of Louis XVI was not to endanger it by untimely interventions.

Bourgoing found the soil not unfavourable. Floridablanca seemed nearer than ever to the end of his tether. The Queen, whose influence was a growing one, well understood that a war, because of the expenditure it would entail, would soon put a stop to her own extravagances. And then too, she did not want Godoy, who was, after all, in the Army, to run the risk of getting himself killed.

This was the moment of passion at its craziest. Maria Luisa had now thrown off the mask and made almost public profession of her love. Manuel, who had in the course of the last few years made many mental notes, just let things happen. Ranks, favours, honours overwhelmed him like an urgent flood. In January 1791, he was made Adjutant-General of the bodyguards, with the rank of General of Brigade; in February, Major-General; in March, Gentleman of the Bedchamber; in July, Lieutenant-General and Major of the Guards; the same month, he was put on the secret Committee set up by the Queen; in August, he received the Grand Cross of the Order of Charles III; in October, Maria Luisa presented him with a splendid carriage, bearing his monogram surmounted by a royal crown and drawn by six magnificent horses. His mother was named a Lady of Honour. Favours were showered on his family and his friends. Some joker released on the Madrid streets a dog carrying on its collar the following by way of identity card: 'I belong to Godoy, I fear nothing.' Being unable to discover the man, the police put the dog in prison. 'The grandees,' wrote Sandoz-Rollin, the Prussian Minister, 'are furious, but they are at Godoy's feet.' Charles IV, now in no doubt of the young man's genius – and his charm – let be and went ever further himself.

Floridablanca, the austere man of law, kicked a little. During a hunting party he even ventured to call the King's attention to

the drawbacks, so far as the public finances were concerned, of the intimacy between the Queen and Godoy. Charles IV, being incapable of keeping a secret, told Maria Luisa all at the first opportunity: the latter played the tragedy queen and, amid floods of tears, threatened to seek refuge with her relations at Parma. The worthy monarch could not abide this prospect which would disturb so many of his habits. Moreover, it was put to him that Floridablanca was endangering peace with his stiff notes and leading Spain straight into a formidable war. Then too – a fact which made her tears of more effect than ever – the Queen was enceinte. That the child his wife carried was probably Godoy's Charles IV did not suspect for a moment. On 29th February 1792, the fall of the Minister was decided on. The King was in a hurry to be off hunting; his signature was obtained to a letter to Floridablanca calling on him to quit office and leave the Court immediately. A carriage was already waiting at the door of the fallen Minister to take him away. He got into it and departed without a word of reproach. A little later some vague pretext or other was found for shutting him up in the citadel of Pampeluna.

Maria Luisa and Manuel had now to find his successor. The qualifications were that he should be decorative and obliging. So they dragged out of his retirement Floridablanca's aged predecessor, Aranda.

The Count of Aranda was now an octogenarian beau who had married not long before a young woman some sixty years his junior. Of the highest gentility, he was also a free-thinker and the head of Spanish Freemasonry; his dream was of the building of a temple on whose portal should be graven the names of Jesus Christ, Calvin, Luther, Confucius, Mahomet, the Grand Lama and William Penn; it was he who, in the previous reign, had set on foot the expulsion of the Jesuits. Maria Luisa, Godoy and he agreed in thinking that his mere presence at the head of affairs would be enough to calm the troubled breasts of Paris and induce them to leave Louis XVI to pursue his placid reign. A singular illusion! The Paris mob gave not a fig for Aranda; on 20th June, it invaded the Tuileries; on 10th August, it cast Louis and his family

into the Temple. On 21st September, the Republic was proclaimed.

Deep was the distress of the Prime Minister of Spain. War terrified him and the Army was, as he knew, in a poor state of preparation. On the other hand, both the Court and the nation were, as he could see, more and more revolted by the indignities inflicted on the French Bourbons. On 8th November he wrote to a correspondent that he feared a French invasion of Spain, adding that, if it actually happened, his request would be 'not for command of the troops, but for a drum to summon the people to arms'. This idea of a drum being beaten by an octogenarian is more than a little ridiculous. Godoy, whose credit was, if possible, still rising, and who had just been made Duke of La Alcudia with a grant equivalent to forty million francs, a grandee of Spain of the first class and Councillor of State, felt that his hour had struck. Bourgoing wrote of him:

'The young Duke of La Alcudia is well-meaning; but he is intoxicated with his boundless authority. You might say that he makes a plaything of the Crown which another's passion has placed in his hands.'

On 14th November 1792, when the Court was at the Escorial, Charles IV, with Maria Luisa at his side, told Aranda that he realised how burdensome the duties of his office must be to a man of his years; for that reason, while leaving with him the duties of Doyen of the Council, he relieved him of those of Secretary of State.

On 15th November, a Royal Decree published in the *Gazette* of the 20th named the new Duke of La Alcudia as principal Secretary of State, while leaving him his post of Major of the bodyguards. The wagging tongues at Court alleged that what the Queen mostly saw in the exalted functions which she had had entrusted to her favourite was their all-absorbing character which should, or so she hoped, prevent him from getting too much involved with other women. Her knowledge of her Manuel was still only superficial!

The new Prime Minister was twenty-five years old. It was almost the age of William Pitt when, a few years before, he became Prime Minister of England.

How different they are, these two young men! The one – of poor physique, studious, dull, chaste, disinterested – was trained from the cradle for the exercise of power. He had reached it in the course of nature, relying on tradition and on the conformity of his ideals, his prejudices too, with those of his people.

The other – overflowing with vitality, attractive, greedy, with a knowledge won at least as much in closets as at school – owed almost entirely to his body a good fortune for which he had received no training and which rested wholly on the favour of a woman.

Pitt was not merely an Englishman – he was England. Godoy, who was half a Portuguese, would, almost to the end, be misunderstood, even when his intentions were of the best, and be hated by the Spanish nation.

The first was a statesman born, lacking passion and emotion, the *homo politicus* par excellence; the second was an emotional adventurer and rather a coward. But, sometimes, a heart may be heard in the bosom of Godoy – an organ which, in Pitt, is hardly audible so feeble are its beatings.

The question of the fate of Louis XVI brought out sharply and at once the difference between the two men: the head of the British government was not concerned in the least to save the head of the luckless monarch. Anxious to avoid war, as far as was humanly possible, and to leave to the Revolution the work of enfeebling France, he even refused to give the credit asked of him for bribing the 'Capet's' judges. The French Republic must menace the mouths of the Scheldt; then only would he decide to wage implacable war. Godoy, on the other hand, in line with Spanish feeling, thought only, even at the price of the invasion of his country, of saving the Bourbon cousin of his King. Only, as he had neither genius nor character, his execution of the attempt to save him would be woefully deficient.

The Spanish Army was small in numbers – sixty thousand men apart from the militia. It was badly equipped and more of its time was given to providing guards, escorting convoys and putting down contraband than to military training. The officers' corps was, as a proportion of the whole, considerable: in the regiments

of the guard, each battalion alone counted seven colonels and seven lieutenant-colonels. But these brilliant cadres were, on the technical side, quite uninstructed. The career of arms was, moreover, not held in high repute, and the young gentlemen who had embraced it often took pensions prematurely that they might cut a dash at Court or improve the yield of their estates. The best troops were, perhaps, the three Swiss regiments. The artillery was nothing much and the engineers were almost non-existent. Under these conditions, Godoy, notwithstanding his real liking for the arts of war, hesitated, not unnaturally, to take on the French army, whose reputation, even before Valmy and Jemappes, was a solid one.

To pressure from the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin to join the Coalition, he returned evasive answers. Valmy and the retreat of the Prussians were not an encouragement to brave courses, and he gave Bourgoing assurance of his wish to stay neutral. But, at the same time, he refused to recognise officially the French Republic and redoubled his efforts to save Louis XVI. Everything that money and backstairs intrigues could do was tried. And when it all proved unavailing, he instructed, in December, Ocariz, the Spanish Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, to hand Lebrun, French Foreign Minister, a note to be communicated to the Convention: the note said that the Spanish government, being resolved not to meddle in the internal affairs of France, would promise to maintain its neutrality, even to the point of dismantling its frontiers, and would recognise the Republic, if, in return, Louis XVI, who would have to renounce his throne simultaneously, was, with his family, allowed to take refuge in Spain.

This communication had the misfortune to displease the Convention. 'We cannot tolerate', cried Thuriot, 'getting the orders of crowned bandits from the Ministers of foreign Courts.' And someone else made this addition: 'We will treat henceforward not with Kings, but with peoples!'

With a view to keeping a closer watch on the contents of letters, whether with Spanish or foreign destinations, Godoy got himself, in addition to his multifarious other duties, the

superintendence of the postal services. While not slackening in his efforts to open a way of safety by corruption, while even having hostages offered to Paris in exchange for the Royal Family, he activated military preparations, massed troops at the passes of the Pyrenees and started negotiations with England.

On 21st January 1793, Louis XVI's head rolled on the scaffold. The news reached Madrid on the 30th where the shock was profound. Not only the Court but the City went into mourning. The feeling was intense all over Spain; the militias got ready, the clergy adjured the faithful to avenge the murder of the Most Christian King. Aranda's proposal to the Council to maintain an attitude of 'armed neutrality' fell on stony ground; popular feeling – the thing which would, fifteen years later, explode so formidably in Spain – was too much for it. This feeling, moreover, was shared by the King, the Queen and Godoy. On 19th February, Bourgoing received his passports. On 4th March, expulsion from Spain was decreed of all Frenchmen who were not legally domiciled there and were not either ecclesiastics or émigrés. On 7th March, Barère declared at the tribune of the Convention: 'The Bourbons must disappear from a throne which they have usurped by the blood and heroism of our ancestors. Let Liberty be carried to the fairest clime and most magnanimous people of Europe'.

On the same day, the National Convention declared war on the King of Spain.



War! Apart from some unsuccessful ventures against Gibraltar and a few police operations in Italy, the Balearics and Morocco, Spain seemed to have got out of the habit of it on land since the time of the War of the Spanish Succession, which had ranged the French armies supporting Philip of Anjou against the Austrian armies supporting the Archduke. Under the Bourbon dynasty, she seemed to have acquired, along with a taste for anything French, a taste for living in peace.

But, at the centre of a Spaniard's being, passion, though it may doze, never completely goes to sleep:

Yo soy siempre la misma Castilla  
Que ante Dios solo s'humilia. <sup>1)</sup>

At the news of war a thrill ran through the country, from the Pyrenees to Cadiz. The bishops published pastoral letters which were veritable calls to arms; from the pulpits, monks and curés preached a crusade against the sacrilegious French; voluntary enlistments grew apace; Catalonia called for a *levée en masse*; several grandees of Spain raised regiments at their own expense; the smugglers of the Sierra Morena offered to form themselves into a regular armed corps; the blind men on the sidewalks decided to leave off begging and celebrate in song the holy war; and, to conclude, there was a stream of patriotic gifts, from the nobility, the bourgeoisie and even from the poor. Whereas the voluntary contribution called for in France in 1790 raised only five million francs, that of the Spaniards in 1793 raised forty-five million.

It was all over now with eighteenth century Spain, a happy, if rather sleepy, place. The flame that lurked beneath the ash, – that flame which, if it had lighted the bonfires of the Inquisition, had also shown the way to the conquest and organisation of a new world – had sprung to life again. It would, in the nineteenth century, have its moments of flickering. But it would renew itself time after time, to burn its brightest, alas, in the fires of civil strife!

This change in the soul of the Spanish people, or rather this return to its true nature, is reflected in the work of Goya.

Until that time, how gracious they had been, the canvases touched by the brush of the Aragonese master, child of the people, favourite of the great! The tapestry cartoons, the 'Meadow of Saint Isidro,' the portraits themselves, evoke in fresh and fascinating colours the graces of a smiling world, of a life that is easy and happy. But now, in the 'Burial of the Sardine' of 1793, for all that its theme is a popular fete, the palette takes on darker hues; the movements grow more staccato, the faces more grinning. The picture that follows almost at once is the 'Procession

<sup>1)</sup> I am always the same Castile which humbles itself before God alone.

of the Flagellants': we see the penitents, coifed in *San Benitos* of nightmare, the blood pouring from their flayed shoulders, and pagan-looking statues of the virgin tottering on the shoulders of hired porters. Next comes 'The Madhouse', a vision of hell, crowded with naked men in the grip of the frenzy of despair. To this same period, too, belong the *Caprichos*, that dazzling series of copperplate engravings in which the artist gives free rein to an imagination that has soured.

Some of the reasons for this bitterness were, it is true, personal to Goya: a somewhat mysterious illness – in which some claim to have found the symptoms of syphilis – was starting to undermine him; he was conscious, too, of the first traces of a deafness which would grow with time; also, his liaison, now several years old, with the Duchess of Alba was proving stormy: that exquisite and capricious woman – how many of the master's pictures reproduce her childlike, enigmatic and slightly wayward face! – looked on Goya as her chattel; but she was not giving up for that either her liberty or her matadors. She appears in the *Caprichos* in butterfly's wings, her feet resting on a group of witches, crouching and repellent. 'The group of witches', so Goya explains, 'which act as support to our elegante is there much more for ornament than because it is really necessary. Some heads are so full of inflammable gases, that, to fly away, they do not need either balloons or witches'. *Volaverunt*, runs the legend: they fly away and are volatile!

'But all that would not by itself explain the evolution of Goya's style: we must not forget the new background presented to the artist – himself so intensely Spanish – by the spectacle of a Spain in which patriotic ardour and the taste for blood are both astir.

A taste for blood, however, could hardly be imputed to Manuel Godoy, the State's young master. He was too easy-going for that; also, perhaps, he was too intelligent. He was in his *Memoirs* to boast that he had begged his Sovereigns to let him take over the effective command of an army. The statement is highly doubtful. All that he did in effect was to decree a change in the colour of the uniforms of the infantry and to dash down on paper a chimerical scheme for a disembarkation in Normandy. In this

way he got himself promoted, with a pay of eight hundred thousand reals, to the rank of Captain-General – equivalent to that of Field Marshal. His constant care to provide himself with props kept him from thinking only of himself. His brothers, brothers-in-law, cousins, allies and parasites were inundated with favours, and his benevolence extended beyond the family circle; a veritable deluge of promotions descended on the Spanish High Command: at a single creation he made twenty-four Lieutenant-Generals, thirty-two Major-Generals. Charles IV gave a passive assent to everything, and, without asking for explanations, in his large copperplate handwriting, this slightly ludicrous penman appended to patents, warrants and ordinances the proud signature of the Spanish sovereigns: ‘Yo, el Rey – I, the King.’

Manuel grew in favour, if that was possible: shortly before leaving Spain, Bourgoing noted: ‘The King visits him every morning when he is dressing and goes to the length of helping him do it. Afterwards they go for a walk together in the gardens of Aranjuez.’ He was given permission to dress his household in the royal livery. Maria Luisa, who was not too religious at the best of times and whom Godoy had provided with an accommodating confessor, spoke, by way of describing herself, her husband and her lover, of ‘the earthly Trinity!’



Meanwhile, there was fighting in the Pyrenees. Three corps guarded the long frontier: that on the East – the Roussillon – was under the command of General Ricardos, a creature of Godoy’s, rather swollen-headed but competent; the command in the centre was held by the Prince of Castelfranco, a Neapolitan in the Spanish service, equally in the favourite’s good books; the Western corps, on the other hand, that of the Western Pyrenees, was under General Caro, whom Godoy viewed with disfavour.

Ricardos could not at first stop the French from infiltrating into Catalonia; later, however, he beat them before the chateau of Bellegarde, drove them back as far as the forts of Perpignan

and occupied Port-Vendres, Fort-les-Bains and Collioure. At the same time, Castelfranco, who, if he had only eight thousand regulars in his command, was helped by the Aragonese hillmen, vigorously defended the wide front entrusted to his keeping. As for Caro, he, after a few skirmishes, crossed the Bidassoa and occupied Hendaye.

This war was a small one, involving very small effectives: 'battles' were an affair of three to five thousand men on each side. But, fought as it was in the heart of the mountains, amid narrow gorges and on headlong slopes, it was rich in picturesque and sometimes heroic incidents. A few striking figures emerge from it, that of La Tour d'Auvergne, marching, pipe in mouth, through the snow and rallying by sheer force of cheerfulness his frozen and famished company; that of General Caro's wife, accompanying her husband to the front line, and, with the help of field-glasses, not losing him from her sight for an instant when a battle was on. Also, if it was not war in kid-gloves, it was at least war courteous, and the two sides came quickly to respect each other.

The Court of Madrid had, in May, concluded a treaty of alliance with the English Court. An alliance in which was no confidence. For the Spaniards, freedom of communication with their American possessions was an indispensable; for that reason, anything which tended to increase the maritime supremacy of the English was suspect. No enthusiasm stirred in them when they saw their own fleet join up with the British to occupy Toulon in which the royalists had risen; rather they feared that Great Britain would convert it into another Gibraltar. And in December they were not displeased to learn that the allied forces had been compelled to evacuate the great French seaport.

The popularity of the war was, moreover, in a decline. The Spanish people saw in it by turns, now a crusade aimed at strangling atheism in France and putting back the Bourbons on the throne, and now a popular movement for the extermination of the invader. It was in fact neither the one nor the other, but rather an exhausting struggle of ambushes and scimmages, victories in which, blown out though they were at Madrid, got

matters very little further. The Spaniard is passionate and generous, but perseverance is not his strong point. Taxation was heavy and there was not much glory. The voice of the grumbler came to be heard – against the government, against, in other words, Godoy.

That attractive and voluptuous young man had none of the fire in his belly which he would have needed to sustain the nation's ardour. He had, at heart, no great liking for battles. Endless stories were rife about him which offended his compatriots, in both their feeling for religion and their feeling for honour. His appetite for wealth was disapproved; he was disliked for the scale of his nepotism, for making the King ridiculous and, at the same time, for his unfaithfulness to the Queen. He granted nothing, it was said, which had not been solicited, for a consideration in nature, by some pretty woman. In the popular imagination – and it was not, perhaps, far off the mark – his house had become a harem. In short, Godoy, who had been quite popular at first, was beginning to get a bad press.

Either all these stories did not reach the ears of the Royal couple or, reaching them, broke idly on an unshakeable preconception. While all this was happening, the Queen gave birth to a son who was christened Francisco de Paula. Great were the official rejoicings, but it was popularly whispered that the new infant was Godoy's son – a rumour which, well supported as it was by a striking physical resemblance, travelled so far that, at a later date, an extraordinary session of the Cortes of Cadiz barred for a time Francisco de Paula from the succession to the throne.

At this time, however, in the early months of 1794, nothing so revolutionary as that was thought of. Yet, at the lower levels of Spanish consciousness, a swing of the pendulum was starting to declare itself. War with the French, the hermetic sealing of the frontier, the vigilance of the Holy Office, the still greater vigilance of Godoy's police, all was of no avail to bar the passage into Spain of the new ideas, and to stop the officers fighting in Roussillon and Cerdagne from acting occasionally as germ-carriers. While monks and curés preached intransigence, the

'Economic Societies' were still active and Freemasonry was at work underground. And there then appeared the first tender shoots of Spanish liberalism – a liberalism hardly less fanatical than the old traditionalism. The two sets of opinions – call them rather passions – would, in 1808, join hands against the French, but would thereafter, down even to our own time, meet in savage conflicts.

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For the time being, however, the point of interest was whether peace would or would not be made with the French. The 'pacifists' made the point that, Louis XVI being dead, a war undertaken to save him had lost its point. Continuing it only played the game of England, whose eye was ever cast covetously on the Spanish colonies. The leader of this party was the aged Aranda who, though he had lost the office of Secretary of State, was still Doyen of the Council. His mind ran no longer on beating the drum and he called in no uncertain terms for the opening of negotiations. Godoy, who did not yet dare admit himself wrong and knew besides that the King was for continuing the war, opposed Aranda. The latter sought to win over the favourite by offering to act as his sponsor for admission to the Order of the Golden Fleece. It was no good; the clash came. At the Council of 14th March Aranda dared, in Charles IV's presence, to attack Godoy in person on the score of his inexperience: Manuel answered: 'It is true that I am only twenty-six years old, but I work fourteen hours out of the twenty-four, sleep only four and am continually at the service of the State.' The King drily observed: 'Enough for today', turned red and left the room. That same day Aranda was ordered to leave the Court and retire to Jaen; soon after he was imprisoned in the Alhambra at Granada. The favourite was left without a rival.

That did not prevent the French Republic, on whose arms fortune was smiling in Belgium and on the Eastern front, from reinforcing its army of the Pyrenees. Ricardos had just died, and his successors – first, General O'Reilly and then the Count de La Union – lacked his skill. In April, the Spanish frontier was forced and in June the French under Dugommier invaded Catalonia.

Godoy took fright. He who, shortly before, had declared himself strenuously opposed to all negotiation now instructed the Count de La Union to sound Dugommier on the subject of an armistice. The flaw in the idea was that the young master of Spain was either badly informed or strangely presumptuous: the possible bases for peace which he transmitted to Dugommier were, that the Convention should withdraw to the island of San Domingo where it could construct a republic in its own likeness, and that Louis XVII, the young prisoner in the Temple, should mount the throne in Paris. This astounding overture was naturally received with indignation and derision. Godoy, being a man of many expedients, then put forward the idea that a small kingdom should be created for Louis XVII in the South of France, while the rest of the country stayed Republic.

That was no language to use to a General of the year III. Dugommier's reply was an offensive which broke the Spanish lines. He was killed on 17th November by an exploding grenade, but Pérignon, his successor, pressed the attack and took the fortified place of Figueras. At the other end of the front the French had already taken San Sebastian.

After an interval of calm, the war flared up again in 1795, but on both sides ardour was damped. The Basque hillmen, acting in support of the Royal Army, brought off several successful *coups de main*; on balance, however, the Republic's troops fared best.

Godoy, impressed by the temper, if not of the people, at any rate of the ruling classes, was now decidedly for peace, and Zamora, his agent at the Spanish headquarters, could even write that it would be better to handle the French gently, for 'to wound their pride might make peace harder to come by'.

In March, the favourite acted. He instructed the Chevalier d'Yriarte, the Spanish Minister at Warsaw, then on holiday in Venice, to go to Bâle, there to make contact with the French Ambassador, Barthélemy. Yriarte was a diplomat of proven worth: Barthélemy would write of him that 'uprightness, solidity and honour distinguished him even more than did finesse; he loves his country before all else.' The Prussian government, itself in nego-

tiation with the Republic, acted as unofficial intermediary.

French dispositions were favourable. The first preoccupation of the Committee of Public Safety was the war to the knife in progress against England; its eyes were already looking, beyond the immediate peace, to the conclusion of an alliance with Spain whose naval power was still impressive. Barthélemy was instructed to be accommodating.

The Court of Madrid – and it is to its honour – put first the liberation of Louis XVI's children. The negotiations, begun on 16th May 1795, revolved around this question. The Convention sensed to the full the danger to republican institutions of freeing the young 'Capet' and letting him live in a foreign country where he would act as a rallying point to the royalists; on its side the Spanish government refused to budge and on 4th June Yriarte declared to Barthélemy: 'Be assured that, if France gave us to choose between one of our frontier provinces and these children, we should prefer unhesitatingly them to it.' Such, and so admirable, was Castilian honour.

The pourparlers seemed at a deadlock when Barthélemy received from the Committee of Public Safety a despatch of 8th June which told him: 'This morning the Convention was informed of Capet's death, which did not rouse much interest –'

Whether or not the news of this death, or of this 'disappearance', merited the attention of the Convention, it certainly made peace with Spain an immediate possibility.

That peace was signed at Bâle on 22nd July 1795, 4 Thermidor of the year III of the Republican era. France undertook to evacuate all the Spanish territory in her occupation; in return, the Court of Madrid ceded to France the Spanish part of the Island of San Domingo; the Republic accepted the eventual mediation of his Catholic Majesty in the forthcoming negotiations with the Italian Courts; lastly, a secret article stipulated for the release to Spain of Louis XVI's daughter. Madame Royale had not the importance for the French republicans that Louis XVII had possessed.

Paris was satisfied, Madrid delighted – its official circles at any rate. This peace which, necessary though it was, was none too glor-

ious and would for long subordinate catholic and monarchist Spain to revolutionary France, was represented in Spain as a triumph, and Godoy was made the hero of the triumph.

All his following was smothered in rewards: upon relations, friends and courtiers fell from on high in the space of a few days four grandeeships of Spain, one Golden Fleece, seven Grand Crosses of Charles III, ten Grand Cordons of Maria Luisa, thirty-seven Chamberlains' Keys, four Councillorships of State, three Captain-Generalships, twenty-seven Lieutenant-Generalships, forty-six Major-Generalships and seventy-nine epaulets of Brigadier-General. In the general joy even enemies were not forgotten. Floridablanca and Aranda were amnestied and permitted to reside on their own estates.

As for the hero himself, the incomparable Manuel, a royal ordinance of 4th September conferred on him a title which Scripture had appropriated to the Messiah: he was created Prince of the Peace.

## CHAPTER IV

### *The Prince of the Peace*

PRINCE OF THE PEACE! There had till then been only one Prince in Spain – he of the Asturias, heir to the throne. The favoured neophyte of the new title received also the honours reserved to the President of the Council of Castile and the right to have himself preceded at ceremonies by a herald bearing a head of Janus.

Such a symbol of wisdom and foresight gratified, no doubt, the twenty-eight-year-old Minister. But his satisfaction was no less undoubted, and larger still, over the grant which accompanied this distinction: a royal estate in the province of Granada bringing in one million reals or about £ 10,000 a year.

The truth is that this big, spoilt child, while not insensible to dignities, ribbons and precedences, ranked them well below money. The Queen was at his orders and the Minister of Finance at his feet; the peace had reduced public expenditure, and of this the favourite took advantage to heap up riches which the voice of the detractor did not fail to rank as fabulous. It was currently said that his fortune reached the equivalent of £ 1,800,000 and nothing was talked of but the ingots which filled the cellars of his palace. There is, no doubt, an element of exaggeration in these stories; and then too, Godoy, if he was sharp, was also generous; he maintained a veritable host of relations, parasites and servants, who must have cost him dear. It is none the less true that his cumulative official salaries and income from estates had reached the impressive total of about £ 25,000 a year. By 1796, the younger son of an Estremadura squire who had come up from his province twelve years before with nothing in his purse was already one of the richest men in Spain.

Money, however, did not desiccate his heart, which was still liable to miss a beat at sight of a pair of fine eyes, an attractive

neck or a dainty foot. He was, it is true, more sensual than sentimental, and was little inclined to make a sighing-matter out of favours of a kind which he was used to receiving on no very heart-breaking terms. But his love of women did not stop at their bodies; he loved also their society and his apartments were always full of them.

Alcala Galiano, in his *Memorias de un Anciano*, would later give this description of a reception given by the Prince of the Peace: 'His palace was guarded by a special corps, looked on as part of the royal *carabineros* but wearing a different uniform. The principal room was filled with a crowd in which the sexes were represented in almost equal proportions. As there was no difficulty about getting in, several women of doubtful reputation were to be found there, and even a prostitute or two – though these last only of the smartest. In addition, sad to relate, there were ladies present who, though as well-situated as they were well-born, were just as ready to peddle their charms for the good graces of the all-powerful Minister and sell their virtue for his favour; it even happened sometimes that mothers and husbands could be seen there, trafficking in the chastity of their daughters and wives respectively. On the appearance of the Prince of the Peace from his private apartments, noise stopped instantly and those present ranged themselves in two lines; each was anxious to be heard or seen by the object of his or her self-regarding devotion. Don Manuel Godoy, who owed the start of his career to his physical attractions, was tall, strongly-made without corpulence, broad-shouldered, slightly bent and very clear-complexioned. The whiteness of his skin showed up the rosiness of his cheeks, a rosiness said by his enemies to be artificial but which was in fact certainly natural. He wore a Captain-General's uniform and held in his hand his baton and his plumed hat. His face was gentle but expressionless; his remarks were precise but unsparkling, though an occasional joke from him was sure to raise smiles whose spontaneity was not above reproach – The reception over, the crowd melted away, cursing as it did so the very man to whom, a minute earlier, it had bent in supplication.'

Ceballos, who was first cousin by marriage to the favourite,

shows us another Godoy; we see him transacting business for an hour or two at the end of the morning, half reclining on a sofa by the side of some pretty woman to whom, in between signing letters and giving instructions to the secretaries, he makes himself agreeable.

Again, the French Ambassador, in a despatch which, though penned several years after this period, relates to it, writes: 'In the evening women only were admitted into the chancery. The rooms, ante-chambers and corridors were full of them. They numbered some two or three hundred, come from every part of the kingdom. Believe me, I do not exaggerate. They entered one after the other. A girl arriving with her mother always went in to the Minister without her. Those who went in came out again with heightened colour and rumpled dresses, which they would then smooth down in full view of everybody. The Prince would give a gay account of what had just been happening. He would not spare either details, praise or criticism, and complained of the distaste he felt for this mixed bag of votaries and pleasures that came too easily. The clerks came in for what fell from the Prince's table. Every evening the same scene was enacted in the very palace itself, the Court looking on and the Queen's apartments being not twenty yards away; the latter would rage and scream and threaten – only in the end to admit herself beaten.'

These cameos may be set alongside the larger picture given us by Rohde, the Prussian Envoy, who writes: 'Godoy rises early and talks a little with his equerries and household staff. At eight o'clock he goes to the stables which the Queen visits regularly to see him get on his horse. That lasts till eleven. Round at his house many people are already waiting for the Prince, to talk business with him. All of them are disposed of in a quarter of an hour so that there may be no delay in coming to the toilette: that is made in the presence of half a dozen ladies of high degree, while a concert is given by musicians. At one o'clock he goes to the Palace, where he has his own office and bedroom, to be present in his capacity of Gentleman of the Household at the Queen's dinner. Afterwards, he descends to his own room, which is just below that of the Queen; there he dines alone, but

is joined by the Queen who, when once the King has gone off hunting, arrives by a secret stair. It is in the course of these secret talks that the Queen and Godoy decide what proposals to lay before the King. Towards seven o'clock, Godoy goes off to get through any necessary work with the King, and at eight descends again to his room, not without encountering in his anteroom thirty or forty women of every class and condition who assail him with their petitions. These audiences take up at least two hours and it is only between ten o'clock and midnight that he can get down to work with his clerks.'

Frivolity and punctuality hand in hand! Reading between the lines of the worthy Prussian, we find a young voluptuary who adores women and would like to give them most of his time, but who knows, also, the fragility of his position and aims at strengthening its two foundations: bodily prestige and the Queen's favour. This explains the daily riding exercise, useful for keeping down a first tendency to fat, explains also those long tête à tête, no less daily, with passionate and forty-year-old Maria Luisa. Everything is not plain sailing in the life of a favourite.

To make such an existence supportable, some lasting affection was absolutely necessary, and this, after some passing fancies, Godoy found with a dark-haired Andalusian girl, orphan child of a penniless artillery officer. Her name was Josefina Tudo: her friends called her Pepita. Vicente Lopez's portrait of her shows us a woman of regular features, large eyes, thick lips, big hands and a rather flaccid air – all utterly different from Maria Luisa. She had come along with her mother Doña Catalina and her sisters, Magdalena and Socorro, to crave some boon of the favourite. She had passed along the road on which many others had preceded her. But she had pleased him and he had kept her. She was no fool and seemed a gentle creature. The Prince of the Peace found with her relaxation and, possibly, love: there was a tender streak in the depths of this libertine. The doubtless unfounded rumour soon got about Madrid that he had married the Tudo secretly. To her, at any rate, though he would not abjure other delights for that, he was to stay constantly attached; at a much later date he would marry her publicly; but, when that

time came, Pepita would be weary of a Godoy who was both ruined and exiled, and would in the end leave him

In 1796, however, there was not even a presentiment of the dark days to come. It was the springtime of the idyll. Strange to say, the Queen, after some fuming and fretting, became resigned. In her passionate admiration for Manuel she accepted in the end everything that could help to make him happy. No doubt, too, she had so lofty a conception of her own rank that she could not lower herself to take offence at the doings of a member of the *petite bourgeoisie*. Was it a case of cowardice, fear of exposure, pride, or supreme cleverness? Within a short time she made her rival a Lady of Honour and the Tудо family did well out of Pepita's favour.

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His entanglement in these sentimental complications still left the Prince of the Peace with enough spare time to play an active part in public affairs.

There can be no doubt that they came easily to him: 'The Prince', wrote Rohde, 'despatches current affairs with great promptitude; letters which do not need much thought he answers on the day of their receipt. In addition his mind is altogether clear and balanced; when, as happens, the agitation of his heart prevents him from applying himself to any one question for long, he compensates this weakness, up to a point, by great firmness of character.'

Firmness of character is perhaps going rather far. But there can be no doubt about good-will, intellectual agility and, above all, charm, the charm which so much affected Bourgoing, the French Agent sent to Spain at the time of the rupture with the Republic, and caused him to write: 'Nature has given Don Manuel Godoy not only external advantages but, better still, good sense and a good heart.'

The Prince of the Peace would not have been, as he very much was, a man of his time, had he not felt a respectful interest in the applied sciences. As proof of this, he founded an Institute of Cosmography, and endowed eleven chairs for the teaching of astronomy, physics and scientific agriculture. He created also a geo-

graphical collection, a central board of hydrography, a model botanical garden, a veterinary school and a college of surgery; he improved the administration of the universities and protected men of letters such as Melendez, the poet, and Moratin, the playwright; he sent a mission to England to study industrial progress there; he encouraged the circulation of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*; he took steps to help foundling children and deaf-mutes; he cut down the privileges of the *Mesta*, that formidable association of big landed proprietors; lastly, he allowed the Jews of the Levant, for a consideration, to return to Spain and settle down at Cadiz.

All these measures, which were not the work of the Prince of the Peace alone but of other members of the ministry as well, did not add up to reforms on the same ample scale as those of a Floridablanca; they took for all that some courage at a time when the Inquisition was still a power in Spain and regarded as suspect every innovation. And not long after Godoy very nearly got into trouble with it. It happened like this:

Despuig, Archbishop of Seville, Valdès, Minister of Marine, and the Marchioness of Matallana, widow of a Spanish envoy to Venice, plotted to unseat the favourite. They pushed at Court an attractive naval officer of Sicilian birth, Malaspina, whose voyages in the Pacific had made him fairly famous, and tried to get him accepted as a lover by Maria Luisa. That inflammable lady fell for him at one moment. But the King, it seemed, was averse to another taking his dear Manuel's place in the affections of his wife. Manuel was put on his guard and took energetic action: the Marchioness was exiled and the handsome Malaspina imprisoned. The Prince of the Peace then thought that the time had come to give his mistress a change of air and, at the start of 1796, organised a triumphal progress through the Southern provinces – a progress which, though it embarrassed the Treasury, enabled the favourite to receive in state the Sovereigns at the family house, suitable restored and embellished, at Badajoz.

Meanwhile, the enemies of the Prince were not idle: the same Archbishop of Seville, helped by the Bishop of Avila and Musquiz, the Queen's confessor, denounced Godoy to the Holy

Office as a blasphemer and debauchee. The Grand Inquisitor was Cardinal Lorenzana, Archbishop of Toledo, who was far from liking the accused. A secret investigation was on the point of being opened, and the usual end to this species of judicial procedure was prison. But the Prince got wind of the affair – thanks, it is said, to a letter written from the Vatican and intercepted by the French, which Bonaparte turned over to Madrid. This time, too, reaction followed swiftly: on 14th March 1797, Archbishop Despuig, Muzquiz the confessor and Cardinal Lorenzana were told to leave Spain at once and proceed to Rome ‘to bring spiritual consolations’ to Pope Pius VI. Lorenzana would later die in exile, after having been forced to give up his archbishopric.

Manuel now had some leisure for fondling Pepita and for exercising his quite good taste on a collection of works of art. He patronised Goya, and in advance of getting him made first painter of the King’s Chamber with a salary of fifty thousand *reals*, asked him to his table, took him on his walks and, as the artist was now stone deaf, even went to the length of learning the language of signs so as to talk to him. A little later, disregarding the satirical allusions to himself which are thought to be discernible in the *Caprichos*, he got Charles IV to buy the plates of them.

This overgrown boy, whose charm was his fortune, was not wholly detestable. As he was to write in his *Memoirs*: ‘My government left behind it no trace of blood; under it State trials were very rare and were more a matter of threats than of actual prosecution. Only those guilty of common law offences were put in prison. Throughout this stormy time, there were no imprisonments without trial and no capital executions.’ The picture is rather too rose-coloured: Godoy was a master of the art of throwing into gaol the occasional public man who had become a menace to him. It is, however, historical fact that, many as were his vices, malignancy was not one of them.



Internal questions were, however, far from monopolising Manuel’s energies. The Minister for Foreign Affairs was also the

Prince of the Peace: he would throughout this period, when Europe was echoing to the clash of arms, be mainly concerned to consolidate this peace for his country.

There was, he thought, only one means to that end: to renew the traditional ties between Spain and France, ties which had been strained by the repudiation of the Family Compact and severed later by the blade which, on 21st January 1793, cut off the head of Louis XVI.

True it was that at Paris power was still in hands that were red with Bourbon blood; and no two countries, it seemed, could be more different than republican, atheist and bellicose France and monarchical, catholic and pacific Spain. No matter: Godoy disregarded prejudices, and even repulsions, in his efforts to convert the treaty of Bâle into an alliance.

Neutrality pure and simple he thought an illusion: the positions held in the world by Spain were too important not to be an object of temptation to one or other of the belligerents, and Spain, alone, was not strong enough to defend them. The only alternative would be an alliance with Great Britain. But Great Britain could not prevent a new crossing of the Pyrenees by the French army. Godoy, moreover, disliked the English; he was on bad terms with the Anglophile coterie of the Duke of Osuna and had observed only recently to Lord Bute, the British Ambassador: 'Great Britain has always gulled Spain'.

Of the Sovereigns' support he was sure. Maria Luisa and, still more, Charles IV saw only through his eyes. Public opinion, so far as there was such a thing, seemed indifferent. The Spanish people had not, as yet, a hatred of the French and, its patriotism back at normal temperature, might well have seemed to a superficial observer (in which category Manuel fell) as wanting little but to return to its processions, its *corridas*, its *fandangos* and its amorous intrigues. The clergy, though they continued to thunder against the sacrilege of the French, felt no great love for the heresy of the English. As for the intellectuals, whose good opinion Godoy was out to win, they, it was known, had found French ideas most attractive. One of the best known of them, Francisco Cabarrus, a financier, born at Bayonne but a naturalised Spaniard,

formerly manager of the Bank of Saint Charles and the father of the famous Madame Tallien ('Notre Dame de Thermidor'), wrote to the Prince of the Peace at this very time a letter overflowing with the spirit of Jean-Jacques, in which he asserted, speaking in all seriousness, that, for Spain to be born again, the good Charles IV needed to apply himself to driving a plough.

So it came about that there was no real opposition to the favourite when he started out on his new policy, a policy which looked reasonable and was, perhaps, inevitable in the circumstances, but which was destined to reduce Spain little by little to the part of a satellite of her neighbour, lose her for a time her independence, make straight the way for the secession of her American empire and, by repercussion, after hurling into exile the Prince of the Peace and his royal protectors, lead in the end to an appalling explosion.

Godoy found the French government favourably disposed: threatened at sea and on the Eastern front by a reviving coalition, it had every reason for wishing to be free of anxiety on its Southern flank. Furthermore, the French government thought, not without reason, that, at a time when it was preparing an expedition against England, it would find the addition of the Spanish Fleet to its own a consideration not to be neglected: Spain still had one of the largest fleets in the world, numbering seventy-six ships of the line, fifty-one frigates and one hundred and eighty ships of inferior rank – the whole, it was true, in a bad state of repair. 'Let us,' said Tallien to the Convention on 14th November 1795, 'with the help of the Dutch and Spanish fleets, lunge boldly at the shores of the new Carthage!'

Enchanted by this sentiment, the Prince of the Peace wrote, not without naïveté, to Zamora, his confidential agent: 'I am delighted to find that my ideal has sunk even deeper roots in France than in Spain. Without that, I am, as regards France, powerless: here, I impose my will by force of law; but, there, only confidence and friendship will bring me obedience.'

Now that peace had been made at Bâle, diplomatic relations had, as was natural, been resumed between the two countries. Godoy sent as Ambassador to Paris the Marquess del Campo,

natural son of a grand seignior and one who, as a friend of the new enlightenment, did not mind mixing with regicides. For its part the Directory, which had just succeeded to the Convention, thought it a graceful act to put Pérignon at the head of the French Embassy at Madrid. Pérignon, a professional soldier who had been a deputy in the Legislative Assembly, was a man of quite good manners and had, for further qualification, just finished commanding the army which had beaten the Spaniards: 'It is pleasant,' wrote Dubayet, French Minister of War, to Delacroix, his colleague for Foreign Affairs, 'to see a soldier enter on a land invaded by his armies, with a branch of olive in his hand and a crown of laurel on his head.'

The gallant General did not succeed in presenting his credentials to Charles IV without committing a few breaches of etiquette. That did not prevent him being the centre of much curiosity and even admiration. The Queen informed him that what she cared for above all else was the happiness of the human race; the small Infante, Francisco de Paula, got entangled in his legs with cries of 'Papa!'; and when he quitted the royal presence, with sabre knocking against his boots, 'not a hat was on a head'.

Even so, the negotiations for an alliance dragged a little. Under the proddings of Pitt and Grenville, Lord Bute tried his hardest to kill them; even at Court there were those who were willing to wound. The Sovereign's visit to Badajoz interrupted them for a time. But Godoy was determined that they should succeed.

Succeed in the end they did and, on 18th August 1796, there was signed at the royal residence of San Ildefonso a treaty establishing for all time an offensive and defensive alliance between France and Spain; in the event of one of the high contracting parties being victim of an aggression, the other was bound to go to his aid with a force of eighteen thousand infantry and six thousand cavalry; article 18 stipulated: 'England being the only power against which Spain has any direct grievances, the present treaty shall, in the event of actual war, have effect only against England'.

In his heart, what Godoy saw principally in the treaty of San Ildefonso was an assurance against any aggressive enterprise on

the part of the Directory; what, on the other hand, the latter sought in it was an effective ally. In the course of the years that followed, this difference in point of view would often disturb good Franco-Spanish relations. But, France being the stronger and the more determined, it would be her interpretation which would, generally, prevail.

On 18th October 1796, the King of Spain found himself, by application of the treaty, obliged to declare war on the King of England. One month later, a Spanish squadron rode at anchor at Toulon to the cheers of the crowd, and citizen Poupinel wrote the following ditty which was sung at the theatre to the tune of the *Marseillaise* :

Salut, enfants de la Castille;  
A nos voix, mêlez vos accents;  
Formons une seule famille,  
Aux yeux des Anglais pâlissants.  
L'intérêt commun nous éclaire;  
Nos mains porteront désormais,  
Pour nous l'olivier et la paix,  
Et la foudre pour l'Angleterre.

*Chorus*

Espagnols et Français, nos drapeaux sont unis;  
Jurons, jurons: paix entre nous, guerre à nos ennemis!

It did not take long for the alliance with the Catholic King to bring the Directory the benefits expected from it: in December 1796, Nelson's English fleet was forced by the numerical superiority of the Franco-Spanish squadrons to leave the Mediterranean.

The Spanish Cabinet, on the other hand, found it a not un-mixed blessing: the French government called on them to summon Portugal to close her ports to British shipping; now, the eldest daughter of Charles IV and Maria Luisa, the Infanta Carlotta, had married the Prince of Brazil, Regent of Portugal during the mental incapacity of Queen Maria I, his mother. The Spanish Sovereigns disliked putting pressure on their daughter and son-in-law which could lead to war. Godoy tried to manoeuvre; officially, he sent strong notes to the Court at Lisbon,

privately, he told them not to bother. Pérignon, the French Ambassador, spotted the double game being played and was not amused.

Another rebuff followed: the French Republic had, by the treaty of Bâle, accepted the eventual mediation of Spain between itself and the Italian States. Here too family alliances entered: another daughter of the Spanish Sovereigns, the Infanta Maria Luisa, had married Prince Louis, heir to the duchy of Parma and, like her, a Bourbon; as to the King of Naples, Ferdinand, was he not Charles IV's own brother? Bonaparte, who had assumed command of the army of Italy, treated these Princes with scant respect and forced treaties on them without regard either to their relationship with the King of Spain or to the stipulations laid down at Bâle. This omission was strongly resented at Madrid.

Finally, the Directory, having, at the beginning of 1796, embarked on *pourparlers* for peace with Great Britain, took them up again at the end of the year: all this they did without bringing in the Spanish government. The conversations came to nothing, but that did not prevent Godoy from thinking that not even 'confidence and friendship' were bringing him much 'obedience' at Paris.

True enough that, so far as duplicity went, Godoy, who had all the weak man's natural taste for intrigue, was not a whit behind the Directory. Although in public he styled the Count of Provence – who gave himself out as Louis XVIII – 'King of Verona', he had frequent conversations with his unofficial representative at Madrid, the Duke d'Havré. But what he did with the right hand did not prevent him, with the left, from authorising Cabarrus at Paris to make use of his daughter, Madame Tallien, along with a certain Marchioness of Santiago, with a view to preparing the way for either the Duke of Orleans or an Infante of Spain to ascend the throne of France.

All this came out and created much bad feeling. Then, too, the French Embassy at Madrid tended, as was quite natural, and notwithstanding Pérignon's wishes to the contrary, to become a rallying-point for the Spanish liberals. Mangourit, the First Secretary, was at one and the same time an active Freemason and a



*Picture Post Library*

GOYA Y LUCIENTES  
(1746-1828)  
Self-portrait, in the Prado, Madrid



*Anderson, Rome*

THE FAMILY OF CHARLES IV OF SPAIN  
(1784-1819)

by Goya, in the Prado, Madrid

fire-eating republican. He made a show of despising the Court; never, he declared, would he be seen, 'castanets in hand, taking part in the Spanish Saturnalia'. On the other hand, he was a frequent visitor to the American Legation, where he met, so he wrote, 'a large number of pretty women, made in the likeness of the Republic in effigy, whereas the faces of the agents of the Coalition reproduce, feature by feature, the carnivorous animals in the coats of arms of their coronets.' Godoy, in the end, was annoyed to the point of saying to the Ambassador:

'If the result of peace has been to introduce revolutionary ferments among us, we should have done better to go on with the war.'

The end of the matter was the transfer to America of Mangourit, as Consul; there he would be able to contemplate, by reference to a larger number of specimens, 'the feminine replicas of the Republic in effigy'.

Pérignon, who was conciliatory, remained on good terms with the Court – up till the day on which he was involved in a silly scrape: he had fallen for the charms of a Frenchwoman of easy virtue, Jeanne Riflon, newly arrived in Spain, and was seen everywhere with her; one of the Embassy's secretaries, moving on parallel lines, had taken the lady's maid for his mistress. The maid revealed to her lover that her mistress was on precisely the same good terms with both the Ambassador of the Directory and the Duke d'Havré, Louis XVIII's agent, and that she revealed to the latter the secrets confided to her by the former. Fury of Pérignon! Abrupt dismissal of the Riflon! But a lady of her talents did not go quietly. 'Fancy my being treated like that', she wrote to the Ambassador, 'after receiving from you proofs of a boundless confidence, by you who were always my first choice at night!' And she proceeded to fill first Madrid and then Paris with the noise of her complaints. Even Talleyrand, now Minister for Foreign Affairs, had no effect on her, and she wrote to him: 'You cannot refuse the prayers of a sex you have never treated ill.' At long last she was silenced, but the ribald had in the interval had the time of their lives with the Ambassador's reputation, which never recovered. What between that and the hap-

penings of 18th Fructidor, it was not long before he was recalled.

Meanwhile, the French alliance continued to be burdensome: on 14th February 1797, a Spanish squadron under Admiral Cordoba encountered off Cape Saint Vincent an English squadron under Sir John Jervis and, notwithstanding numerical superiority, suffered crushing defeat. After this defeat, the naval forces of Spain were in no position to prevent the English from bombarding Cadiz and seizing Trinidad in the Antilles.

Thanks to Godoy's policy, his country's navy was now set on the course at the end of which lay Trafalgar. But this thought hardly troubled one whose mind was wholly occupied with two great personal affairs: the Mastership of the Order of Malta and his marriage.

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The Prince of Rohan, Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, Sovereign of Malta, was very ill. Once dead, who would be elected to succeed him? The question was, from the point of view of France at war with Great Britain, serious, for Malta was one of the bastions of the Mediterranean. No one understood this better than Bonaparte; at that time wearing his Italian laurels, he was, perhaps, already thinking of Egypt.

He was, besides, as he admitted, interested by Godoy – a man who, though nearly his contemporary, was already General and Prime Minister when he, the Corsican adventurer, was only captain. An idea came to him: why not push the candidature of Godoy? The latter would certainly be enchanted, not only at attaining so illustrious an honour, but at having henceforward a refuge to shelter him at need from the blows of his enemies. In this way the French government, and Bonaparte especially, would get an advantage in their dealings with the Prince. Malta would be in safe hands and Spain would at last agree for sure to declare war on Portugal, whose ports served as bases to the British men-of-war – a two-fold defeat for Britain.

On 26th May 1797, the victor of Lodi wrote to the Directory: 'The island of Malta is extraordinarily important for us. The Grand Master is dying, and his successor should, it seems, be a

German. It would require five or six hundred thousand francs to get a Spaniard named. Would it not be possible to drop a hint to the Prince of the Peace that here is something that should interest him?’

The scheme found favour at Paris, and Pérignon, the Ambassador, was charged to broach it to Godoy. The latter kept his head and laid down conditions: he must have money; he must be dispensed from the vow of chastity taken by the knights of Malta. As to money, Charles IV took charge of that, declaring to the favourite: ‘I will do whatever is needed to enable you to assume with honour the new dignity intended for you.’ As to the vow of chastity, the new French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Talleyrand, who was here in his element, undertook to negotiate a dispensation.

But at this moment Rohan suddenly died. The Knights, who did not in the least want Godoy as Grand Master, hurried on the election and chose, as Bonaparte had predicted, a German called Hompesch. In the astounding career of Maria Luisa’s lover one thing will always be missing: the headship of a religious Order.

Truth to tell, this failure may not have distressed him much, in the assurance which he now felt of long continuing as the real master of the Spains. Was not an event now preparing which must, it seemed, round off his fortune and ensure the permanence of his power? This was nothing less than his entry into the family of the Catholic kings.

Charles III’s youngest brother, the Infante Don Luis, had married lawfully, but morganatically, a Spanish lady of quality, Doña Teresa de Villabriga. Three children were born of this marriage, one of them a daughter who took the name Countess of Chinchon. A charming little countess she was, whose dimpled face, large, wondering eyes and slightly rebellious head of light hair Goya was to paint in a ravishing portrait; Charles IV and Maria Luisa decided to give this delightful child in marriage to their favourite.

‘Charles and –!’ but the decision was really the Queen’s. And what feeling was it that impelled her to find a wife for her lover? Needless to say that at Madrid, as at all the European Courts,

explanations were ten a penny. The one generally favoured was that the Queen hoped in this way to detach Godoy from his numerous mistresses, and most of all from Pepita Tudo. Possibly, but may it not be, too, that, in a passion in which there was something of the maternal, she was glad to forge an indissoluble link between herself, her husband, and her dear Manuel? Truly the Queen of Spain and the Indies was no ordinary woman!

As for Manuel, though he thought it well enough, he was not lost in gratification. His mind had long toyed with the idea of marrying royalty. Had he not dallied for an instant with the plan of marrying Madame Royale, the luckless daughter of Louis XVI, who had sought refuge in Austria? His attitude was one of dignified detachment and, in September, the marriage was celebrated.

Strange to relate, it was the King's cousin who felt that honour had been done to her. On the occasion of her marriage, she was granted leave, child of a morganatic union though she was, to take the Bourbon name and arms; at the same time her brother was raised to the rank of Infante. She wrote to Maria Luisa: 'I am well aware, madame, how much I owe to my husband; it is to him that all my family owe the good fortune which is now theirs, and myself more than any of them, for my entire happiness consists in loving this husband of mine and being his; that is the strongest reason I could have to sacrifice myself, should it be necessary, on behalf of your Majesties who have granted me such a spouse.'

The object of this devotion thought it too small a thing to call for any change in his way of life from him; in particular, he had no idea of giving up Pepita. Rohde, the Prussian envoy, wrote: 'After he had drawn the dowry of five million reals, Godoy had the effrontery to return immediately to the Tudo, with whom he lived more intimately than ever; he now provided her with a house of her own to live in'. And at a slightly later date the Russian Chargé d'Affaires informed St. Petersburg: 'After the marriage the Prince seemed anxious at first to make do with the Queen and his wife; but, at the end of a few weeks, he returned to his mistress - The latter now spends all her time with him;

she occupies the first place by the Princess's side at all meals and parties; people of the highest rank treat her with great respect.' Pepita was at any rate a most assiduous courtier and Maria Luisa did not look too displeased to see her.

The Queen, if we may believe the tittle-tattle of the day, went to the bodyguards for consolation; these, however, could not heal her wound and she gave, for the first time, attentive ear to the enemies of Godoy.

Enemies the Prince did not lack, even at the heart of the Ministry which he ruled. To strengthen that Ministry, he had recently had portfolios entrusted to two men of distinction, Saavedra and Jovellanos: they would in a little while be his rivals. Saavedra had won a reputation as an active and competent administrator while serving on the Supreme Council of War; more, and much more important, he was credited with being very much in the Queen's good books. As for Jovellanos, sociologist, economist, jurist, playwright, poet in his spare time, he was one of the brightest spirits of his age; Goya painted him about that time, sitting at his desk, forehead resting on hand, with an air at once keen and thoughtful; a partisan of the new ideas, it would be his fate to be hooted in 1812 by the mob for being too friendly to the French.

Men of such worth as this could not long endure subordination to a soldier of fortune, much their junior, whose wits, though nimble, were frivolous, egoistical and vainglorious. Godoy, for all that, would have been astute enough to keep them in place had he not come up against a more formidable adversary: none other than the French government.

After 18th Fructidor, government at Paris came into the hands of Jacobins resolved to press on to the end with the war against England. The conversations begun with London were broken off and Madrid was told that it must come down off the fence. Pérignon, whose misadventure with the Riflon had somewhat discredited him, was replaced at Madrid by Truguet, formerly Minister of Marine, 'young, handsome, polished and very talkative', but a revolutionary of the first water. The new Ambassador alluded to Spanish tergiversations when he presented his

credentials: 'Sincere friendship and loyal devotion to their allies; unstinted valour against their armed foes; contempt and punishment for traitors: these are the sentiments, Sire, of the French people and their government; these they demand and expect from their allies.'

Jacobin eloquence was not, however, wholly incompatible with fatuity: 'I seem to have observed', he wrote, 'that I have made noticeable inroads on the Queen's heart: this will in time serve the turn of the Republic.' He turned it to account by making two demands on the Prince of the Peace: he must put a stop to the activities of the French émigrés in Spain and he must undertake vigorous action against Portugal.

On the first point Godoy gave way. A Royal Edict was issued ordering the émigrés off Spanish soil, Majorca alone excepted; on the second he sought an interval for further prevarication. To this end he sent on a secret mission to Paris a personal friend of his, by name Izquierdo, and to him he wrote before long: 'I am delighted with the steps you have taken for killing the idea of invading Portugal and for persuading the French that I am their friend. Keep me informed without delay of everything that happens – anything especially that may have a bearing on my personal safety and may serve my interests.'

Useless manoeuvres these! The Directory had become markedly hostile to the Prince of the Peace. They refused their assent to Cabarrus, his nominee for the Embassy at Paris in place of del Campo: not long after, they expelled Izquierdo. Exposed as now he was to the hostility of the clergy, the intrigues of the Palace, the ill-will of his leading colleagues, the intermittent tantrums of the Queen and, last but not least, the animosity of the Directory, Godoy felt that his position was compromised.

He could, it was true, still fight back, and, in particular, he had only to put away Pepita to win back the Queen and the whole Queen. But how do that when he really was in love? Then, too, his quick wits told him that the future would be more manageable if he retreated in good order now rather than waited for disgrace. In short, following a sharper disagreement with Saavedra than usual, he offered, quite suddenly, his resignation.

The Queen, who was in a highly nervous state, accepted it; the King, who was passing through a fit of ill humour, resigned himself to it. On 28th March 1798, the Prince of the Peace was relieved of his duties as First Secretary of State and Major of the bodyguards.

But this relief hardly spelt holiday, much less exile; Godoy preserved, along with all his other dignities, his special access to the Court, and Charles IV said of him: 'I am extraordinarily pleased with the zeal, the devotion to my person and the success with which he has managed all the business of the ministries of which he has had charge. I shall be infinitely beholden to him for all the rest of my life.'

Charles, Maria Luisa and Manuel were not yet ready for an enduring separation. Death, and nothing but death, would break up 'the earthly Trinity'.

## CHAPTER V

### *Godoy in the Wings*

WITH GODOY momentarily out of the way, Saavedra was made First Secretary of State in his place. But almost at once he fell gravely ill and, in August 1798, had to resign. By a strange coincidence, the other person of importance in the Ministry and the other opponent of the Prince of the Peace, Jovellanos, was almost at the same time laid low by a mysterious illness and also found himself obliged to retire from active life. There was no lack of people at Court who believed that there was something unnatural in all this and that poison might well have had a hand in it.

Saavedra's place was taken by Urquijo, Secretary-General of Foreign Affairs, a thirty-year-old diplomat trained in the school of Aranda, elegant, witty, free-thinking and light-headed. Jovellanos's successor was Caballero, a career magistrate given to low intrigue. Urquijo, moreover, was the lover of Godoy's sister, the Marchioness of Branciforte.

In addition, so it was said, Urquijo was being wooed by the Queen, though that was not a thing to prevent her being loyal at heart to Manuel; it distressed her to be no longer seeing him every day, and without his ever-welcome presence she felt more keenly, along with the ravages of age, the animosity which, even at her Court itself, was rearing its head against her.

The sallies which wounded her most keenly were those discharged at her by Maria Pilar, Duchess of Alba. That jaunty and fantastic imp, strong in charm and birth and wealth, and with a taste for bravado, made it her mission to ridicule the nearly fifty-year-old queen, whose confidante she had at one time been. It was a riot of scandals, slanders and breaches of faith, and the noble entourage of the pretty Duchess was kept in fits of laughter. She went even further, to the point of brazen impertinence: Maria Luisa, who worshipped clothes and was prone to dress herself

much too young, had had sent her from Paris the latest fashionable creations. But the Duchess also had her spies among the leading modistes: and the Queen had the extreme mortification, one day when she had on a particularly successful dress, of seeing Maria Pilar's female retinue all wearing exactly the same. Women do not forgive that sort of insult!

This story had a sequel. Whatever the reason – an intrigue of Manuel's or the conventions observable by those who have recently lost their husbands – the Duchess had, greatly lamenting, to leave the capital and retire to her Andalusian estate of Lucar de Barrameda, on the seashore. But she took with her Goya, whose absence was deeply felt both at Court and about town. The painter himself hardly minded; his health improved and he needed no more than the bright eyes of his lady and the voluptuous radiance of the Southern landscapes. To this period of mixed exile belongs the beautiful 'Last Supper' at the Santa Cueva at Cadiz; also a curious portrait of the Duchess, in a black mantilla and dress, feet at right angles, eye rather wild, and wearing on her index finger a ring inscribed: 'Albert Goya'; in conclusion, the albums in which, with a freedom seldom lacking in audacity, he depicts in sepia or red chalk various gallant episodes in the philanderings that made up life in the white villa of San Lucar de Barrameda.

At the end of a year, Goya came back; he marked his return by painting, in a style in which baroque influence is discernible, the throbbing crowd and caressing angels of the 'Miracle of Saint Anthony of Padua'; to the same period belongs the weasel face, cunning and rather terrifying, of Guillemardet, the former doctor of Autun and regicide of the Convention, who had just taken Truguet's place as France's Ambassador to the Catholic king. But now the Duchess returned too, and the Queen experienced fresh tremors.

Happily, she knew where to quiet them: Godoy had now practically returned to favour. After a few months of the sulks, divided between his wife and his mistress, he again made approaches to Maria Luisa and wrote her doleful letters: 'Let Your Majesty but try me. Let Her entrust me with perilous missions in

which none but myself is exposed to danger – But Your Majesty will not. No, she does not want me for that. Let her will be done!’ And again: ‘Manuel, who has given Your Majesty so many happy hours, will never cause you a moment’s displeasure and will always remain the same loyal and grateful servant’. Maria Luisa, and Charles IV even more so, asked nothing better than to make it up, and Manuel reappeared at Court more and more often. By the end of 1799, he was there almost permanently; though without portfolio, he was more powerful than the Ministers. With assurance of influence, insolence returned to him: the Queen’s latest gigolo was a completely nugatory bodyguard of the name of Mallo, who had been made a majordomo of the Palace and almost buried in gold; one day when Godoy was presenting, at San Ildefonso, his respects to the King, the latter asked him: ‘Manuel, what is the truth about this man, Mallo? Every day I see him with new horses and carriages; where does he get so much money?’ This was how Godoy answered: ‘Sire, Mallo has nothing in the world; but he is, as everyone knows, kept going by an ugly old woman who robs her husband to pay her lover.’ Charles IV exploded with laughter and, turning to the Queen, said: ‘Luisa, what do you think of that?’ The poor Queen could only stammer: ‘Surely you know, Charles, that Manuel must always have his joke!’ Mallo was disgraced without delay and a slightly peeved Maria Luisa wrote to Godoy: ‘Although the King got to know you through me, it does not need me for him to continue to protect you.’

At a later date the Abbé Bianco, at that time a hanger-on at Court, wrote in his *Souvenirs d’un proscrit*: ‘The Queen, in the first flush of her attachment to Mallo, had been frail enough to give herself away on paper – so Mallo’s house was surrounded in the middle of the night by the Prince of the Peace’s agents, and he was forced to hand over his valuable manuscripts. Godoy understood their value too well to give them back to the writer, and kept them, it is said, as a potent talisman, not to preserve his mistress’s love, but to master her fits of inconstancy and jealousy.’

Azara, then Spanish Ambassador to France, noted: ‘At Madrid, all is intrigue and whoring at a high level; changes are in the air.’

At Paris, meanwhile, there were intrigues too but of soldiers and politicians, and the change came: 18th Brumaire, overthrow of the Directory, advent of Bonaparte. From then on the Madrid Cabinet had a partner with whom it was dangerous to play tricks.

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Striking indeed was the contrast which the entourage of the First Consul then presented to the Court of the Catholic King. There, we see nothing but young commanders covered with laurels, illustrious savants, ravishing women; all was glory, grace, intelligence; liberty and the future were with it. Here, on the other hand, was a past which lived on in constraint, routine and hypocrisy, in a setting of withered faces on which the degeneracy born of too much intermarriage had set its marks.

The proof is as magnificent as it is overwhelming: at the start of 1800, Goya painted the 'Family of Charles IV', one of the most staggering masterpieces of art and psychology that has ever issued from a painter's palette.

There they are, those Spanish Bourbons, degenerate offspring of an illustrious race; there they are, drawn up in no sort of order, like participants in a game of Aunt Sally, and blissfully offering to the beholder a vision of crosses, diamonds, velvets, laces, bedizenments and degradation: in the middle is the King, a presentable enough man if you like, but too heavy, too flabby, too complacent, too expressionless; beside him is the Queen, tired in face, challenging in bosom, with a look at once wooden and aggressive, all eaten up with acridity and unsatisfied desires; she holds by either hand her two last children, Doña Maria Isabella and Don Francisco de Paula who, from being, as was claimed, the fruit of her nights with Godoy, escape their share of the general family ugliness and show, on the contrary, fresh and delicate features. All around are the other children, male and female, those whose misfortune it is to be legitimate. Going from right to left: the sickly Maria Luisa, Princess of Parma, holding her nursling in her arms; her husband the Prince, heir apparent to Parma, fair, puffy, and looking slightly dazed; the Infanta Carlotta, Princess of Portugal and Brazil, eldest daughter of

Maria Luisa and more debauched even than her mother, of whom nothing is seen but her bloated and inflamed face; the Infante Antonio, brother of the King, with a sullen, cunning look; Maria Antonia of the two Sicilies, who would marry two years later the Prince of the Asturias and is seen with head turned away, for she was at that time living at Naples and Goya did not know what she looked like<sup>1</sup>;) the Infanta Maria Josefa, sister of the Queen, with her strange head as of a haggard sorceress and the eyes of an owl; Ferdinand, Prince of the Asturias, heir to the throne, at that time sixteen years old, with his underhung jaw and ungainly air; lastly, and no better-looking, Don Carlos, Ferdinand's younger brother, for whom at a later date so many Basques and Navarrese would sacrifice their lives.

In the background to this disquieting family stands, unconcerned, Goya himself, unseen but felt, who has thus laid on canvas with a broad brush the incomparable treasures of a dazzling palette. It is not true, what has sometimes been said, that he has caricatured his models deliberately; rather he has painted them just as, in his own clear-sighted genius, he saw them. The Sovereigns in any case expressed themselves enchanted with the picture, Maria Luisa pronounced it 'the best of all paintings', and Goya was paid on a lavish scale.

Someone, however, is missing on the canvas, the most important, perhaps, of all the members of the royal clan: Godoy. But he was not one to leave his features long unpainted for the record by 'the first painter of the Household'; in August of that same year, 1800, he summoned Goya to Aranjuez and had himself painted in full-dress uniform, mounted on a ramping horse. Today, unfortunately, the work is lost.

The artist knew, for all that, that these prematurely aged Princes and Princesses, even this fop of a favourite himself, were not the whole of Spain – all his dear Spain, at once so elegant and democratic, so passionate and detached, so captivating and dis-

<sup>1</sup>) According to some authorities, the face seen between the Infante Antonio and the Prince of Parma is that, not of the Infanta Carlotta, but of the Infanta Maria Amelia, who died in 1798 i.e. more than a year before the painting of the picture; it would in that case be Carlotta who is depicted with head turned away. But Carlotta is known to have had a slim figure – a fact which seems to negative such a theory.

concerting. He had but lately brought to teeming life the tempestuous crowd of the 'Miracle of Saint Anthony of Padua,' but lately conjured up the charming silhouette of the 'Young man in grey', who is probably his son, Xavier; he had finished his bewitching *Caprichos*; he now ranged in their balcony those exciting *Manolas* who, standing out against the dark cloaks in which two men are wrapped, seem like the very salt of Spain; lastly – and with what loving brush! – at this same time he laid on shining cushions the plump body of the *Maja*, clothed in one picture, naked in another – a body which is not, though it has been said, that of the Duchess of Alba, but of a woman of the people, mistress of a great lord. Godoy, a connoisseur, quickly made himself the owner of those two pictures.

Long live Spain! There we see the real Spain of Goya, and one of the best aspects of the Spain of all time.

But the Spain on which Alquier, the new Ambassador of the French Republic, turned his gaze, was a much more limited affair – it was the Spain of the 'Family of Charles IV'.

Like Guillemardet before him, whose place he had taken, Alquier was a regicide. But quite a nice one. A deputy first in the Constituent and then in the Convention, it could be taken as certain that he had voted for the death of Louis XVI, with stay of execution, only from want of courage and to save his own head. Under the Directory, he had been a member of the Council of Ancients; on 18th Brumaire, he rallied at once to Bonaparte and was rewarded with the Madrid Embassy: in short, an opportunist.

But not at all a fool: observant, witty, inquiring, wielding a pretty pen and a nice sense of humour, but still capable of being shocked. That is not to say that he had any real knowledge of politics. The most he could be called was a detective. As befitted an old intimate of Choderlos de Laclos, the author of *Liaisons dangereuses*, what interested him about Spain, what gave him verve and formed the leading theme in his voluminous correspondence, was the life of the Court and the intrigues of the Palace with special reference to the behaviours of Maria Luisa and her favourites.

On that subject he is inexhaustible. Let us listen to him: 'Life here is debauchery in its full horror and scandal of the most revolting kind; urbanity, delicacy, public or private decency, these are utterly lacking. Morals are corrupt without tincture of sweetening. No care is taken, no veil is thrown, to hide this appalling spectacle from the eyes of the multitude, and there is not, perhaps, a single person in the whole of Spain who does not know that, to appease the Queen's unnatural sensuality, the assiduity of the King (the nominal holder of the office), the fleeting attentions of the Prince of the Peace, and the frequent assistance of the choicest of the bodyguards, are all required.'

Or again: 'The need of hiding, over the last thirty years, the profligacy of her life has accustomed the Queen to dissimulation at its deepest. There is not a woman lies with more assurance or is more consistently false-hearted. Irreligious, and unbelieving even, as she is, she is also faint and timid beyond measure, and at the least appearance of danger runs the gamut of superstitious terrors: she may be seen coating herself with rosaries and relics whenever there is a clap of thunder. Every day she writes to the Prince of the Peace, and is regaled in return with every sort of escapade that happens in Madrid. While the King is at dinner, the First Secretary of State regularly confers with her for almost an hour. This mark of deference is obligatory. At the age of fifty she gives herself airs and graces that would hardly be tolerated in a young and pretty woman. She loves nothing, not even her lovers; Godoy insults and beats her, the rest rob her.'

Still further: 'The Queen loves nothing. Among her favourites there is, out of the whole pack, only the Prince of the Peace who has been able to subdue this empty and frivolous soul. His ascendancy is, even today, immense and his good pleasure is never disregarded. This act of subjection should not be ascribed either to love or to habit. The Prince very well understood the heartless woman he was dealing with and all that it held for him of danger. He has, for this reason, got her in such a corner that, whereas he need never fear again what her malice can do to him, she goes in perpetual terror of his vengeance. Never was a woman so scorned and insulted, and she has often undergone

acts of violence and brutality at his hands such as a drunken soldier would not permit himself with a prostitute.'

The scabrous tales passed on to Paris by the Ambassador should, however, be accepted with some reserve. No more than any other member of the Diplomatic Corps did Alquier live in the royal intimacy. What he relates of the Sovereigns' private lives is hardly more than the echo of the stories circulating in the ante-chambers of the palace, in the drawing-rooms of the aristocracy, in the chancelleries of the embassies, and also in the offices of the Minister Urquijo, now on bad terms with the Prince of the Peace. In other words, a discount should be given. No one doubts that Maria Luisa of Spain was as much the opposite of a Maria Theresa of Austria as Godoy was of a William Pitt. No one doubts that the recent attempts to set them up in virtue again are a very risky game for the historian. But they were not for all that the vicious buffoons set down by Alquier in despatches destined to convulse Bonaparte and Talleyrand.

The joke is that this turncoat revolutionary, whose word for common men was '*canaille*', showed himself profoundly shocked by the twists given, all for love of Manuel, to the traditional etiquette: the Princess of the Peace was enceinte; so the Queen permitted her to be carried in a chair across the rooms of the palace – a thing never done except for a royal consort: and Alquier was as angry at it as any *camarera-mayor* of the old school could have been. In October 1800, the Princess gave birth to a girl; without a moment's delay, Charles IV and Maria Luisa, along with a numerous suite, moved from the Escorial to Madrid to pay their compliments to the mother, and insisted on being the god-parents of the baby Carlotta; at the baptismal rite, the child was carried from Godoy's house to the Royal Palace in the arms of the lady-superintendent of the Queen's Household and in a carriage escorted by halberdiers of the Guard; the Grand Inquisitor himself administered the sacrament; the baby was decorated with the Order, reserved for children, of Maria Luisa: innovations these which excited the scandalised astonishment of the old regicide. 'The Queen', he wrote 'having lived openly and shamelessly, for all Spain to see, with the Prince of the Peace both

before and after his marriage, having, besides, had by him two children whose paternity none disputes, quits her Court and goes out of her way to invite and defy all eyes at a religious ceremony whose glamour puts the final touch to the unheard-of distinctions lavished by her on her lover. The decencies are all forgotten; the venerable customs of the monarchy are violated, and the forms set aside for marking the births of members of the Royal Family are brought into use when the child born is a stranger to the royal blood; the King, whose good-nature is shamelessly abused, is pitchforked into this infamy which lowers the dignity of the Sovereign and outrages religion and public morals. And it all takes place in the capital city, under the eyes of a vast crowd and in the most catholic country of Europe. With due allowance made for the difference in times and places, reference must be made to the pages of Tacitus and Suetonius for conduct comparable to this.' A love of etiquette does not exclude a knowledge of the classics!

Merciless as regards the Queen, Alquier is indulgent to the King. In another despatch he writes to Talleyrand: 'The thing that must strike most those who watch Charles IV in the bosom of his Court is his blindness where the conduct of the Queen is concerned. He knows nothing, sees nothing, suspects nothing of irregularities which have been going on for more than thirty years. Neither the warnings he has received in writing, nor the intrigues going on all around him, nor the marks of favour lacking both pretext and precedent, nor the attentions which violate all usage and all decency, nor even the existence of two children who bear, as is obvious to all, a striking likeness to the Prince of the Peace – nothing has availed to open the King's eyes. Do not imagine that this blindness is the result of his being stupid. The King is far from wanting in the normal amount of ordinary good sense. His conversation is friendly and good, and incomparably more fluent than Louis XVI's. But, used as he is to regular morals and prevented by piety from thinking ill of another in anything of importance, he has reached such a pitch of purity that he does not believe in adultery, especially where princesses are concerned, for you must know that the Queen has

proved to him in her gay and friendly conversations with him that the splendour of her surroundings would be quite enough to banish temptations if any came her way. Finally, and to prove to you the lengths to which his credulity can go, I will add this final word: he tells anyone who cares to listen, and with so much simple good-faith as to make it impossible to look him in the face, that his brother, the King of Naples, is a fool who lets himself be run by his wife'.

Perhaps, however, Charles IV both saw more and cared more for his own peace and quiet than the Ambassador suspected. An odd man, certainly, was this Prince, whom anything that was not hunting and manual occupation bored, and who, by sheer force of dynastic pride, ended up by becoming his own species of democrat. 'He takes no account', Alquier again, 'of distinctions of birth and does not even notice them. The Medina-Celis, the Albuquerque, the Altamiras, the Osunas, all these grandees who take such pride in their origins, mean no more to him than his grooms: he has the same way of speaking to everyone. Where he feels a preference, he shows it by jokes of an offensive character, by making sadistic fun of the personal misfortunes of the preferred and by knocking them about as hard as he can: this last makes him laugh till he cries, for he loves hitting and beating people, and these proofs of the King's familiarity, coarse and unmannerly as they are, are none the less received with a smiling gaiety.'

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Meanwhile, the 18th Brumaire had been warmly acclaimed at Madrid: 'The satisfaction is general,' wrote Alquier, 'perhaps because it is thought that this change of government in France is part of a whole which will restore tranquillity in Europe, for Spain greatly needs peace. Charles IV knows, and is glad to know it, that Bonaparte is not systematically opposed to religion. Maria Luisa dreams of the new fashions which Paris will launch on the world once order is restored in that city. Godoy is naturally delighted by the fall of the Directory, which, not long ago, drove him into resigning; he hopes much from the men of the new régime, especially from Talleyrand, and, to secure their favour,

is organising through the new Spanish Ambassador to France, Muzquiz, a veritable office of corruption.'

The First Consul had three reasons for being interested in Spain: her alliances with the Italian Courts, her Fleet, the gold from her American possessions. The first could be made to serve a policy of penetration into Italy, the second would bring timely reinforcement to the French Fleet hard hit by the disaster at Aboukir, the third would come in very useful in aid of the Republic's finances, which were none too healthy.

For these reasons Bonaparte decided to smile amiably on the Court of Madrid and, for a start, presented the Prince of the Peace with a valuable suit of armour, forged in France. The hand of Talleyrand is visible in this flattery of a man who, though he was no longer anything at all officially, was, actually, everything. Delight of Godoy! delight of the King! who had been promised some guns of French manufacture. As for the Queen, she was unable to contain herself at the news that Bonaparte had ordered for her at the House of Mlle. Minette, the famous Paris dress-maker, several dresses 'of the most dazzling kind, such as an attractive brunette in her early twenties would select.'

Charles was not going to be behindhand: he despatched to the First Consul sixteen Andalusian horses, the finest that could be found in the royal stables. Alquier had written: 'A matter which is of some importance because of the impression which it will make on the King is that the man in charge of the escort should make it easy for the King's grooms to hear mass on fête-days.' Orders were given to that effect and the worthy monarch, who attached a quite extraordinary importance to this equine embassy, pronounced Bonaparte to be 'a good catholic'. Only in May 1802, however, did he receive the famous guns for which he had waited as impatiently as any child. Meanwhile, he gave full rein to his admiration for the First Consul, that precious and faithful ally; when the French Army forced the passage of the Great Saint Bernard against the Austrians, rubbing his hands with satisfaction he remarked to Alquier: 'Matters are going well for us. We have beaten them once and will beat them again. It is splendid, we are getting on.'

Spain, moreover, loyally fulfilled her duties as an ally of France. The English fleet, though it harassed her coasts and bombarded her arsenals, encountered, first at Ferrol and then at Cadiz, a stiff resistance. At this latter port, though the garrison was ravaged by yellow fever and hardly enough men could be found to fire the guns, the governor returned, notwithstanding, a haughty answer to the summons to surrender given by Admiral Lord Keith, and the English ships made off. Though the Spanish Court was rotten in parts, the Spanish people was still, as ever, sound as a bell.

The diplomacy of the Consulate, under Talleyrand's lead, vigorously exploited the friendly dispositions of Charles IV, and General Berthier, who had Bonaparte's entire confidence, was sent to Madrid as Envoy Extraordinary. He and his aides-de-camp, then in the full flush of youth and military glory, made a powerful impression on the Queen, who was always partial to the military. On 1st October 1800, Berthier and Urquijo signed the second treaty of San Ildefonso: in consideration for a promise made to the heir-presumptive of the Duchy of Parma, son-in-law of the Spanish sovereigns, of an extension of his Italian domains, Spain gave up to France the vast spaces of Louisiana and promised, to boot, to put at her ally's disposal six men of war, completely fitted out, of seventy-four cannon each.

This treaty, which sacrificed the interests of the Spanish Empire to those of the Royal Family, delighted the Sovereigns. In agreement with Godoy who, true to his policy, sought friends at court everywhere, they valued Talleyrand at silver-plate to the tune of a hundred thousand francs and Josephine at diamonds of a like amount; all the French go-betweens received large douceurs.

The Prince of the Peace now decided to make another move towards the effective recovery of power, for he felt assured that Paris was no longer hostile to him. Urquijo, the minister, had, by his anti-Vatican, and indeed anti-clerical, policy, made many enemies; on 13th December he was dismissed and told to leave Madrid. Godoy did not deign to succeed him, thinking it, no doubt, beneath the dignity of a member of the Royal Family to be First Secretary of State; but he got installed there his first

cousin by marriage, Don Pedro de Ceballos. His calculation was that the latter would prove a mere man of straw; in actual fact, the artful Ceballos would give his relation several years of docile service and betray him at the first convenient moment.

But that time was still far-off. For the time being the Prince of the Peace, now comfortably installed between the Queen, who was intermittently his mistress, the Princess, who was his wife, and Pepita Tudo, who was his favourite, felt less doubt than ever about his genius and his star. Some weeks earlier, when Urquijo was still in office, he had put on an aggrieved air and written to the Sovereigns: 'My titles are like gauds which might be useful for dressing up an ape; events are on the move and I am completely in the dark. I should be glad to be there but for the knavish tricks of which I know your Majesties to be the victims.' So now we see him deliberately leaving the wings, thrusting right to the footlights and dreaming, swashbuckler that he is and unable to get Bonaparte's successes out of his head, of piling success in war in the field on success in love in the alcove.

Meanwhile, behind all this pasteboard decor, stands the Spanish nation, now suffering hardly, now laughing broadly, now praying fervently. In the salons of the aristocracy, the Duchess of Alba's latest impertinence is hawked about and the new lover of Rita Luna, the actress, is criticised, but there is also a passion for French ideas even among those who rage against the demands of the French government. In the popular *bodegas*, discussion rages on the newest thrust of Pepe Hillo, the matador, or on the latest sermon of Brother Diego, but the heroism of the defenders of Cadiz is extolled and the libertinism of the favourite is attacked. In South America, the white native creoles protest against the 'peninsular' whites who come there only for exploitation. Casaldo speaks of 'unhappy America' and 'tyrannical Europe'. Miranda and Bolivar have come from Caracas to travel Europe; San-Martin from Buenos Ayres; Bernard O'Higgins from Chile; they are passionate men who, at the touch of the revolutionary air, feel within themselves the hearts of 'liberators'. Far away from the Madrid Court's low intrigues, and without the Prince of the Peace knowing in the least, the Iberian world fermented.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Oranges and Laurels*

ABOUT THE TIME that the second Treaty of San Ildefonso was signed Bonaparte had become convinced that, to get the most out of his advantageous position in Spain, he must be no longer represented there by a regicide like Alquier, but by someone more in keeping with the régime installed in Paris after 18th Brumaire. Berthier had certainly shown himself an adroit negotiator, but his services were needed at military headquarters, and the other possible names were of men who were either unknown or undesirable. In the end the First Consul's choice fell on Lucien Bonaparte, the most intelligent as well as the most restless of his brothers. Two birds were thus killed with one stone: such an appointment could not but gratify the Court of Spain, while also removing from France for a time a man whose memory lingered too lovingly on the decisive part played by him on 18th Brumaire.

Alquier had been transferred to Tuscany by the time that, in November 1800, the new Ambassador arrived at Madrid with a gorgeous suite. His physical appearance of a 'little Italian Jew' did not make him the less ostentatious and, as the brother of the master of France, he made it his business to keep great state. His table was open, himself was liberal; he paid discreet attentions to Maria Luisa, flattered Godoy, made much of the *grandees*, sought the company of the artists, was open-handed with the commonalty and took as mistress the Marchioness of Santa Cruz, who had already been Guillemardet's. The King was delighted, found this member of the Bonaparte family charming and, an unheard of favour, gave him a pair of shoes made with his own august hands. More than that, he took to greeting him, as he did the *grandees* of Spain, with the familiar 'tu'. And to the Marquess of Santa Cruz who expressed respectful astonishment at this, he answered: 'What would you have? This young man is so friendly

and prepossessing that I cannot harden my heart to treat him differently from the rest of you!’

The Prince of the Peace guessed at once what a valuable ally might be this Ambassador, who was even younger than himself, had the same sort of supple intelligence and was, like him, the friend of women, luxury and money. Relations between them, which were from the first excellent, steadily improved. Godoy made a show of putting them on a footing of comradeship and deployed his charm. ‘I promise you,’ he said to Lucien, ‘the frankness of a soldier whose one regret in life it is not to have been able to share sometimes in the dangers run by your brother.’ The man so addressed fell for it, and sent despatches to Paris in which he strove to re-establish the favourite’s reputation. ‘There are,’ he wrote, ‘three quite separate men in the Prince of the Peace: the Prime Minister, the favourite and the private individual. Contrary to what his enemies maintain, he has a ready understanding. His efforts on behalf of his friends have brought him much ingratitude.’ And at a later date Lucien added: ‘The number of Godoy’s enemies shall not prevent me from saying that I have always found him agreeable, serviceable, sincere and understanding; he is noble and gallant with the ladies, personally brave and much better informed than his enemies admit; I have shown him the same friendship as he has on all occasions given proofs of to me.’

Really, it was a honeymoon! The Ambassador was, moreover, enchanted by everything in Spain – the Spanish ladies first and foremost. ‘They exude,’ he wrote, ‘a perfume that charms the senses. Their dainty feet hold fast the eyes. Diplomacy does not make me either blind or insusceptible.’ And he ordered from Mlle. Minette, the fashionable Parisian dressmaker, dresses to send to his lady friends: they reached him by diplomatic bag. Yes, indeed! Lucien and Manuel were made to understand each other.

They agreed so well that, as rumour had it at Madrid, Godoy busied himself in trying to marry Lucien off to that one of the Queen’s daughters, the Infanta Maria Isabella, whose father he was said to be. In reality, the Prince of the Peace and Maria Luisa

were aiming at bigger game, the First Consul himself. Lucien, whom nothing would have pleased better than to see Josephine discarded, undertook to take discreet soundings of his brother's intentions: this he did in a somewhat involved despatch. But the Infanta – the healthy-looking child set down by Goya in the middle of Charles IV's unprepossessing family – was only thirteen years old, while Bonaparte was unwilling to be done with Josephine from whom he still had hopes of children; he was uncertain, too, how republican feeling, still running strong in the French army, would welcome his marriage with a Bourbon. He therefore wisely kept silent on the subject to Lucien; a little later he would say to Volney: 'If I was contemplating a second marriage, I should not go to a house in ruins to look for my descendants.'

Meantime, there were serious matters to be thought of: the First Consul was not the man to let his brother fill up his time with the feet of Castilian ladies and matrimonial intrigues. Negotiations started which were, on the Spanish side, conducted officially by Ceballos, the First Secretary of State, but in reality by Godoy. They were concluded briskly: on 29th January, 13th February and 21st March 1801, three conventions were signed, the first two at Madrid, the third at Aranjuez; they were concerned with the affairs of Portugal, the Fleet and the question of Parma respectively.

As regards Portugal, it was agreed that Spain would send her an ultimatum summoning her to break off the English alliance and to allow, by way of security, Spanish troops to occupy a part of her territory; in case of refusal, war would be declared and a French corps of fifteen thousand men would come to the support of the army of the Catholic King.

As to the Fleet, it was laid down how many ships should be put at the disposal of France and in what circumstances they should be used; but, as it happened, they could not be used in time to save the French army blockaded in Egypt.

As to Parma, which was ruled by Ferdinand, Maria Luisa's brother, it was no longer a case of enlarging its territory: the object of the First Consul now was to lay hands on this duchy

and he proposed to give Ferdinand in exchange Tuscany, which was both richer and more populous and would, with the addition of Piombino, be raised to the status of kingdom; the fly in the ointment was that the Duke, being a stranger to Napoleonic methods and not relishing being treated like a prefect, refused this 'promotion'. Great was the indignation of Maria Luisa who was passionately set on her daughter, the wife of the epileptic heir-presumptive of Parma, becoming a future queen and did not understand her brother's scruples. 'What an egoist he is!' she wrote to Godoy; 'his only concern is with his own good pleasure and his own sacred purposes; he refuses to submit to the smallest inconvenience or to be in anyone's debt for anything. What a man!' In the end the consent of Ferdinand was dispensed with and the convention of Aranjuez declared that 'the Duke of Parma has renounced his hereditary States'; the good man was, as it were, put on the retired list and it was his son and daughter-in-law who were made the direct beneficiaries of Tuscany, now become the 'Kingdom of Etruria'. A few weeks later, the new Sovereigns visited Paris to give thanks to Bonaparte, who was thus enabled, eight years after the execution of Louis XVI, to present to the people of Paris the spectacle of Bourbon Princes posturing as vassals.

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Meanwhile, the dreams of Godoy were more than ever of military glory. He longed passionately for the war against Portugal for which the convention of 29th January had prepared the way. What honour would be his were he to realise, under the sceptre of Charles IV, that unity of the Iberian peninsula which had been the aim of so many Spanish Sovereigns! Moreover, the Portuguese army was, as he well knew, small in numbers, badly equipped, poorly commanded and of no great worth: the risk was a small one.

The stipulated ultimatum was sent to Lisbon. The Prince of Brazil who was Regent of Portugal, (his mother, Queen Maria I, was insane), turned to the English for help. But he met with disappointment; Pitt, ill and war-weary, in difficulties too with his Sovereign in the matter of the Irish catholics, had just decided to

quit office. Peace with France seemed to be inevitable and the Foreign Office had no desire to have on its hands any new trouble. Frere, the British Minister at Lisbon, received very chilling instructions: 'In the present state of the European war it is not possible for His Majesty, having regard to the needs of the defence of his own territories, to divert any part of his military forces to the help of Portugal.' In short, Portugal was left to her own devices.

The Prince Regent still hoped that the Court of Madrid would at the last moment hesitate. Was he not the husband of the Infanta Carlotta, daughter of the Spanish Sovereigns, and had not the latter consented to the sacrifice of Louisiana to ensure a throne to another of their daughters?

True it was that, as a physical specimen, Carlotta did no great credit to her parents, to judge by the picture given of her not long after by Mme. Junot, the future Duchess of Abrantès:

'The Princess of Brazil was hardly five feet high, measured along the longest straight line in her body. I use that curious expression because a fall from her horse had shortened her hip to such an extent that she limped grotesquely, and that one of her shoulders, no less thrown out of the straight, had taken an entirely different direction to that taken by the other. As a result of all this, the bust of the unfortunate Princess was, like the rest of her body, a mystery of Nature when it amuses her to go all wrong. I have heard it said by those who have had the privilege of seeing it unveiled that the rest too was a riot of malformation.

'The head which this body supported might, as is often the way with hunchbacks, have compensated the general deformity by being beautiful; but Nature had decided to finish her handiwork as she had begun, and on this mis-shapen body rested the most grotesquely ugly head that the world can ever have seen.

'The eyes were small and squinting, and looked out with a vicious or mocking air. Her nose, because of much hunting and a libertine and vagabond life, was nearly always as red and swollen as that of a Switzer; her mouth, quite the oddest part of this repulsive face, was furnished with several rows of black, green and yellow teeth, set askew like a pipe of Pan or a fringe of

curtain! Her skin, besides being rough and tanned, was, for good measure of ugliness, covered with pimples which were nearly always suppurating, and was hideous in the extreme to look at; her hands, which were black and ungainly, were set at the end of bony and utterly shapeless arms. Her feet subtracted nothing from this charming ensemble. Her hair was half-fuzzy and black, or, more accurately, brown, and of a kind which brush and comb and pomade combined can never make seem human or deprive of its horselike quality. The Princess of Brazil had, along with this truly incongruous face, some of the strangest tastes! There was no doubt about the susceptibility of her heart anyhow! This unfortunate disposition was for ever landing her in adventures the recital of which would be disgusting without, as in the case of Boccaccio or the Queen of Navarre, being comic. It was not a case of gallantry or even abandon. It was, rather, an infamy, a squalid delirium of whatever an imagination that was at once as passionate, as threadbare and as sensually sluggish as was possible could hope to spawn. She had not even a regular lover because, so she said, she did not want to be beaten as her mother was by Godoy, and wanted her liberty. Of this last commodity she made ample use!

This picture may, it is true, be too dark: Mme Junot was a harsh and not always truthful critic. If, as is certain, the Princess lacked both beauty and chastity, at least she was well-read, intelligent and very energetic. The fact remains that the Spanish Sovereigns had no very lively affection for a child like this. For all that, at the very moment of going to war with Portugal, the excellent Charles IV threw himself into Lucien Bonaparte's arms, exclaiming: 'Alas, my dear Ambassador, how terrible for a King to see himself constrained by politics to make war on his own daughter!'

Godoy, like Lucien, did not waste time on these considerations. He had just had himself made commander-in-chief of the army, was preparing, in concert with General Morla, a plan of operations, and could now talk of nothing but strategy, tactics, marches, counter-marches and envelopments in classical style. Not without wisdom, the First Consul had attached to him, to keep him

straight, one of his really good generals, Gouvion Saint Cyr, and he also constituted, by way of reinforcement to the Spanish army, a small French corps commanded by Leclerc.

On 27th March 1801, Spain declared war on Portugal. On 3rd May, the Prince of the Peace left to take over the effective command of the troops.

How fine for him to be parading now at the head of an army in his dazzling uniform, and in that very Estremadura which saw him as a child, as the small younger son of a badly-off family! Unable to contain his joy, he wrote to the Queen: 'To the devil with files of papers when I am on the point of making the enemy listen to reason at the cannon's mouth. Never shall I be able to live in the future without soldiers; the sight of them thrills me and I was born never to leave them. I cannot express to Your Majesty what pleasure swells my heart. I have but one regret: ah, how happy should I be if my Sovereigns were here! All is agitation, warlike bustle and rousing fanfares! And all that, Madam, intoxicates the imagination. Let me never hear talk again of political intrigues – never, Madam, for the love of God! and may I be sent to the ends of the earth with my troops! I want never to leave the colours. May Your Majesty deign to let me serve her with the sword for no shorter time than I have served her with the pen!'

And the impressionable Maria Luisa trembled for her favourite as she answered him: 'Do not expose yourself too much. Do not tire yourself. Do not take the field on that skittish horse of yours. Find one that is quiet. Ah, Manuel, what battles fill my imagination. I seem already to see you with the Portuguese lion crouching at your feet and accepting whatever conditions you see fit to impose on it! Cover yourself with a glory which shall be renowned among our children and great-nephews!' The excellent Charles IV said ditto to this in, as must be admitted, a less flowery style: 'I am assured', he wrote to Manuel, 'of your incomparable zeal, love and fidelity towards us and you may be sure that you will find in me an undying feeling of gratitude and that I shall always be your true friend. The Portuguese, who have lost their spirit for the fight, must be punished!'

At midnight on 19th May 1801, the Spanish army entered Portugal; on the morning of the 20th, it attacked and took the fortified town of Elvas – Elvas that was visible among its olive-yards and orange-groves from the family property of the Godoys. On the approaches to the town a soldier cut two branches from an orange tree and, with a gallantry entirely Spanish, handed them to the Prince of the Peace who sent them to the Queen; this gesture gave the war its name – ‘War of the Oranges’.

It was a short war. Four days after it had started it was learnt that the Court of Lisbon was thinking already of an armistice.

It might have been supposed that Godoy, who, in his letters to the Queen, was now comparing himself favourably with Napoleon, must have been utterly determined to crush the enemy once for all and must have scornfully rejected any premature overtures. Not at all. We now see him writing to the Sovereigns to advise them to make peace!

The reason was that, for all his conceit, he was not a fool. He knew well that the laurels which he had culled were as subject to decay as the orange branches which had been given him, and he had no mind to endanger in fresh adventures a glory won so easily. Moreover, Leclerc’s supporting French corps had just entered Spain, and the favourite saw no point in sharing with it the honours of victory. Lastly and above all, he had had conversations with Lucien before the start of the campaign, in the course of which it had been agreed between them that the war must be made to earn benefits of a substantial kind for its two prime movers. Who could doubt that the disposition of the Portuguese government would be to pay heavily for a rapid cessation of hostilities? Whereas chasing it as far as Lisbon and forcing it, perhaps, to sail away to Brazil would be to risk killing the goose.

For this reason Godoy invited Lucien to come to Badajoz where the pourparlers for peace were to open; at the same time he took steps in advance to palm off on his accomplice the entire responsibility for the intrigue. As he wrote to the sovereigns on 1st June: ‘Lucien has orders to demand of the Portuguese for his government fifteen million francs and his intention is to exact thirty; on my observing to him that this was a very large sum, he

reduced it to twenty-five and said to me: Fifteen for the government and ten for us. I said to him in reply: My dear friend, if the government gets fifteen millions, you ought to be content with five for yourself; therefore you should only ask for twenty. At that he said to me: And how about you? You must take your chances by the forelock, they do not come every day.' And such was Maria Luisa's admiration for this proof of delicate feeling in her Manuel that she exclaimed: 'These millions of the French Ambassador! What a scandal! And the pity is that it must be hushed up!'

At Badajoz, the negotiations were hurried on between Godoy and Lucien, on the one part, and Pinto de Souza, the Portuguese plenipotentiary, on the other. On 6th June, a Spanish-Portuguese treaty and a Franco-Portuguese treaty were both concluded: Portugal got off with the cession to Spain of the town of Olivenza and to France of a part of Guiana, together with a promise to close her ports to British ships: this bore little resemblance to the demands previously agreed on at Madrid, which called for the occupation of at least one third of Portugal pending the conclusion of peace with England.

Before Lucien had had time to affix his signature, a despatch reached him from Talleyrand telling him to insist on an extensive military occupation and also on the junction of Leclerc's corps with the Spanish army. Lucien pretended afterwards that he received this despatch a day too late, and signed without more ado. When Bonaparte heard about it, he was extremely annoyed. He refused to ratify the treaty and rated his brother in a letter in which he accused him, in strong terms, of having let himself be tricked by Godoy. And on the Ambassador expressing the wish that a portrait of the First Consul should be sent to Godoy, he got for answer: 'Never will I send my portrait to a man who keeps his predecessor in a dungeon and employs the methods of the Inquisition. I may make use of him, but I will feel for him nothing but contempt.' Talleyrand, too, in his annoyance at the Prince of the Peace's insistent demands that the French troops in Spain should be withdrawn, wrote to Lucien: 'The government of the Republic conceives itself to have the right to

expect of His Catholic Majesty that he will prescribe for the men whom he honours with his confidence the use that they shall make of it, and will punish them for their presumptuous lack of consideration in regard to the French nation and its government.' And he added: 'Make it clear to the Prince that, if he should draw the King and Queen into measures contrary to the honour and interest of the Republic, the consequences would be terrible for the Spanish monarchy. In default of a complete performance of undertakings, the last hour of that monarchy would have sounded.' It was the first rumbling of the storm.

Thus admonished, Lucien took up the negotiations afresh, obtained from the Court of Lisbon a few supplementary concessions and, on 18th September, signed with Portugal a new treaty which the First Consul ratified on 29th September. But this, if it served Lucien with his brother, lost him the confidence of Charles IV; tired of a mission from which there was now nothing much more to be hoped, he clamoured loudly for his recall. On 12th November, before he had obtained recall officially, he left Madrid, leaving behind him the Marchioness of Santa Cruz, but taking with him quite a number of old masters presented by the King or bought on advantageous terms, taking with him, best of all, some diamonds received as 'diplomatic presents' of a value which, though exaggerated in current gossip, was quite up to two and a half to three million. In his coach, which was escorted by a squadron of hussars, he examined their water and lustre, but in so great a hurry was he to get these treasures safely into France that he refused to wait for search to be made for a small bag full of brilliants, which he had mislaid en route. The reception given to him by his formidable brother was decidedly cool.

Godoy meanwhile continued to count on him. A strange correspondence sprang up between the two good friends, in which real names had their places taken by pseudonyms: Bonaparte was called Achmet; Talleyrand, Ali; Godoy himself Gustave, and so on. The former Ambassador stayed faithful to the favourite and, later, wrote to him: 'My brother has revised his opinion of you. He has come completely round and has told me to tell you so.' A little later, he wrote again: 'I am sensible of your marks of

attention to me. Whatever the circumstances, I shall always give to Spain proofs of my desire to see her strong and powerful and you, Prince of the Peace, happy and well-pleased'.

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Happy and well-pleased Manuel could not but be and with reason: the treaty of Badajoz had paid him good dividends, and the speed of his victories in Portugal entitled him – he sincerely believed it – to rank himself with the greatest captains in History, Bonaparte included; his Sovereigns improved on this good opinion and were, besides, grateful to their hero for having, by means of a quick peace, spared the future throne of the Princess of Brazil who, however deformed and depraved she might be, was still their daughter. The Queen had compelled the Prince of the Asturias, who hated the favourite, to write him a letter of congratulation; all the women were at his feet; gold piled up in his cellars; lastly, he had just had conferred on him the title, hitherto unknown in Spain, of 'generalissimo of the armies', along with the right to wear a blue sash – powers and a rank which raised him higher than all the subjects of the Catholic King. Why, when all seemed so fair, should his heart feel spasms of anxiety? Why, seeing that Manuel was not a spiteful man and wished, once his own appetites were satisfied, nothing but good to others, why must he feel himself hemmed in by jealousies and hatreds? Why all the sinister rumours, the disloyal scraps of song, the deadly calumnies which his spies brought back to him? Why, so often, behind the obsequious mask of those he spoke with, did he divine a passing light like the flash of a pistol? Why did the grandees of old family, who always addressed one another with the familiar 'tu', never do it to him, but must always call him Excellency? Why did the loungers in the street spit on the ground as his carriage passed? Why did he catch unawares behind him a monk in the act of crossing himself as a gesture of exorcism? Why did Bonaparte abuse him so? Why, most of all, did the Prince of the Asturias, the future King of Spain and his future master, wear in his presence the air of a whipped, ill-tempered dog looking for a chance to bite? The truth was that, though the

present was dazzling, the future had a not too bright look. Manuel was, it is true, sure of the favour of Maria Luisa and Charles IV, but they were much older than himself and their health had already given grounds for anxiety. Supposing they died – then what?

As if to confirm his fears, the King had just received a serious warning – a sharp pain in the side, choking sensations, threatened apoplexy: for several days he was given up for lost. The Queen and Godoy had hardly left his bedside, had been present at the applications of leeches and at the bleedings, and they were suspected of having obtained from the sick man a codicil naming them joint regents pending the time when the heir to the throne should be old enough to rule himself. It was added that the two accomplices were determined to put that moment off indefinitely. Talleyrand, at Paris, must have had wind of this story, for he wrote to Gouvion Saint Cyr, Lucien's successor, to instruct him not to recognise, in the event of Charles IV's death, anyone as King except the Prince of the Asturias.

In this respect Godoy saw his plans go awry – more was the pity! In the event of the King's death, to be regent, to marry Maria Luisa, to turn out that surly Ferdinand, to have himself crowned – what a consummation! Bonaparte, after all, was credited with the intention of founding a dynasty: and was he, Manuel, the victor of Elvas, the descendant of Visigoth princes – the hack genealogists guaranteed his descent from them – not worth as much as this Corsican parvenu? All very well, but the Corsican was complete master of the situation: the key to it was with him and he was the man to woo. That one failing, there were other plans worth considering, such as would at least assure to him security together with a respected and opulent old age: perhaps, with Lucien's help, he might get himself allotted a principality in Italy, or, best of all principalities, carve himself one out of Portugal, whose weakness had just been exposed and whence it would be possible still to follow affairs in Spain. All that bore thinking about, and Godoy's brow, ordinarily unclouded, would wrinkle, and he, who liked insouciance, would sigh.

Meanwhile, a great moment in history needed fixing for the

eyes of posterity: so the Prince asked Goya to paint him posed as a victorious captain. The portrait is not, perhaps, one of Goya's best, but, such as it is, is very characteristic of its sitter: Godoy, slightly stout and ruddy, in full uniform as generalissimo, covered with decorations, sabre at side, switch in hand, reclines in the open, half-lying on cushions; behind him is the lean and yellow silhouette of an aide de camp; in front is a captured Portuguese flag; in the background are horses, troops and the bustle of a camp. It is, no doubt, the evening of a battle: the hero holds negligently a paper which he does not read; it is the indolence of a man sure of himself.

Godoy at that moment lavished favours on Goya. But these, alas, could not save the painter from a terrible shock, certainly the worst of his life: the Duchess of Alba died. For some time Maria Pilar had seemed to have a presentiment that her end was near and to have been hurriedly extracting from life everything that it had to offer her: her receptions became more sumptuous, her fancies more scandalous, her impertinences more outrageous; there was no end to the stories about her, her amours with the toreros and her clashes with the Queen. It was said that, Maria Luisa having twice tried to have the palace of the Duchess burnt to the ground, the Duchess herself, at the conclusion of a ball, set fire with her own hands to the curtains of her salons, observing: 'This will save Her Majesty trouble!' And plenty of other things were said too. But a time came when this remarkable woman fell ill of a disease which the doctors could not diagnose. Naturally, it was said that she had been poisoned. She dragged on for a little, gave away, like a good disciple of Jean-Jacques, a part of her goods to her peasants, took a last, loving look at her favourite pictures and died on 23rd July 1802, when she was still under forty. Goya never quite recovered from this blow: though his technique would still, if that were possible, show advance, the fairy enchantments of his palette would never more gleam with the old radiance: his world was now in shadow. As to Godoy, who had been entrusted by Charles IV with winding up the Duchess's estate, he, by some sleight of hand, quickly got possession of three of the finest pictures which formed part of it:

a Virgin of Raphael, the Garden of Love of Correggio and the Venus of the Mirror of Velasquez.

Meanwhile, the Spain he ruled had a moment's peace. France, her imperious ally, had decided to make peace, – or, rather, a truce – with Great Britain, and the Madrid government acted, naturally, in association with that of Paris. In October 1801, preliminaries of peace were signed in London; in March 1802, the definitive treaty was signed at Amiens. Spain hugged the peace to her bosom, for, by reason of the British blockade, the galleons were no longer reaching her from the Indies, her finances were adrift and famine had raised its head. But it was an onerous peace for her: the First Consul, who had not forgiven Spain for the premature end of the campaign against Portugal, sacrificed her to England's appetite for colonies, and she had to surrender Trinidad, the pearl of the Antilles. Charles IV found easy consolation in the thought that he had gained the Kingdom of Etruria for one of his daughters. And Maria Luisa reflected, for her part, that she would now have more money to spend on jewels, frippery, and presents to handsome bodyguards. The nobility lampooned away, but under its breath. The people, that almost unknown quantity, seemed satisfied. Godoy dreamed of new intrigues to weave. From time to time Talleyrand, the limping tempter, would murmur to Bonaparte, though without apparent effect, that, beyond the Pyrenees, was a pear ripe for the plucking.

## CHAPTER VII

### *The Road to Trafalgar*

PEACE! How better celebrate it than by a marriage or two? The Spanish sovereigns were ambitious parents; one of their daughters was already Queen of Etruria and another was Princess Regent of Portugal; now they wanted a throne for the third, for Maria Isabella who passed for being Godoy's child rather than Charles IV's and had for one moment been thought of as a possible bride for the First Consul. The groom now in mind was her first cousin, Francis Janvier, hereditary Prince of Naples.

But Queen Caroline of Naples, who was a masterful woman, was not going to give her consent to this union unless, as part of the bargain, her own daughter, Marie Antoinette, received the promise of a crown: in other words, anyone wanting Maria Isabella of Spain to become hereditary Princess of Naples by marrying Francis Janvier must simultaneously agree to Marie Antoinette of Naples becoming hereditary Princess of the Spains.

Queen Caroline caught the nearest way to success: she wrote a letter to Maria Luisa, her sister-in-law, which contained a pompous eulogy of the Prince of the Peace. Maria Luisa, now in the seventh heaven of delight, instructed her favourite to make all arrangements. The negotiations went trippingly, the canonical dispensations were swiftly obtained from the Pope, the contracts were signed by Godoy for Spain and the Minister Acton<sup>1)</sup> for Naples, the double marriage was celebrated by proxy and, on 30th September 1802, Francis Janvier and Marie Antoinette disembarked at Barcelona where the Royal Family awaited them.

Nothing was now seen but balls, receptions, popular fêtes, bull-fights, fireworks, illuminations, military reviews, religious processions – the usual clatter of official rejoicings. And there was the usual train of favours and promotions: one Captain-General,

<sup>1)</sup> Sir John Francis Acton, Bart, (1736-1811), prime minister of Naples under Ferdinand IV and grandfather of the first Lord Acton, the historian.

forty-two Lieutenant-Generals, eighty-eight Major-Generals or Commodores, three Golden Fleeces, thirteen Grand Crosses of Charles III, twenty-one ditto of Maria Luisa, and minor dignities beyond number; pensions and valuable presents also rained down; these cleared out the Treasury but reliance was placed on the galleons coming from America across a now unblockaded Atlantic.

After it was all over, Francis Janvier returned with his bride to Naples and the Prince of the Asturias went off to Madrid with his.

Marie Antoinette of Naples was eighteen years of age. Puny and chlorotic though she was, she had delicate features and was not without dignity and grace of a kind. Her young husband – he was the same age as herself – proved in no hurry to fulfil his marital duties. On that score, Caroline of Naples, who had little use for the Spanish Bourbons whom she dubbed ‘a family of crétins’, used language of a vitality which lost nothing in the telling by Alquier, now French Ambassador at Naples and no less a patron of tittle-tattle there than at Madrid. But that did not prevent the little Princess, who was ambitious, energetic, cultivated and vivacious, from quickly achieving an ascendancy over Ferdinand. To bring them together, they had at any rate a common object of loathing: the dissoluteness of Maria Luisa and the intrigues of Godoy.

Ferdinand, Prince of the Asturias, was at that time a somewhat flabby youth, with an enormous nose and an undershot jaw – ‘Hideous to look at’, as his mother-in-law was later to write of him, ‘with a tubby shape, round knees and legs, a small, delicate voice – and utterly dull’. Though singularly lacking in energy and physical courage, he was not for all that a fool, had been befittingly educated by his tutor, Canon Escoïquiz, and took some pains to fit himself for the role of king. Of plebeian tastes, rather bigoted and rather cruel, he was, for a descendant of Louis XIV, very little of a Bourbon. The Spanish people would recognise itself in him – in its less desirable aspects – and he would long be its idol. Meanwhile, his sickly childhood, his mother’s tyranny and his pent-up loathing of Godoy had made pretence and dissimulation second nature with him.

He was not, however, so good an actor that Maria Luisa had not divined how much he hated her dear Manuel. The poor Queen had done all she could to change her son's feeling: 'This evening', she wrote on 14th October 1800 to her favourite, 'Charles and I talked to Ferdinand and told him that he ought always to love and esteem you; the King added that you well deserved it. But alas! it pains me to see that he is not like his father, or like me!' Threats followed on prayers: the Prince of the Asturias was parted from his tutor, Escoiquiz, and from his first gentleman, the Duke of San Carlos; they were replaced by creatures of Godoy's, and the Prince was allowed to read only such books as Godoy had passed; he was given to understand that, very possibly, he would be disinherited. All was in vain: Ferdinand kept silence, seemed to yield and, when he had to, wrote, on his mother's orders, friendly letters to the Prince of the Peace, but even a man of small psychology must have felt the bitterness and the craving for vengeance which welled in his heart.

The people knew of the Prince's feelings; when, as it quickly did, it realised that the Princess shared them, the young couple enjoyed a popularity which was a source of rising irritation to the Queen and the favourite. Before long, the Queen, in a letter to Godoy, would be speaking of 'this rascally Court of Naples, and this slut who fans the flames, my daughter-in-law'.



Gouvion Saint Cyr did not stay long as French Ambassador at Madrid. To succeed him, Bonaparte and Talleyrand chose another soldier, General Beurnonville, an officer of the old régime who had rallied to the Revolution, had commanded the army of the North in 1792 and had, after 18th Brumaire, transferred to diplomacy and been placed at the head of the Legation at Berlin. He was something of a braggart and disposed to swash-buckling, but the First Consul thought that the time had come to speak roughly to the Court of Madrid. The Peace of Amiens was proving precarious, a resumption of hostilities was in sight and France must be able to count on Spain as regards both money and ships.

Hardly had Beurnonville arrived at his post on 4th January 1803 when he made contact with Godoy. His first impression was none too good: 'So far', he wrote to Talleyrand, 'I have no definite opinion about the Prince. He makes claim to being a great man; but anyone who has talked with him twice and realised the extent of his ignorance cannot but wonder at seeing the whole of Spain at his feet. As it is he who controls everything, we must either attach him to our interests or overthrow him'. The favourite, on the other hand, was well-pleased. 'The French', he wrote to the Queen, 'make endless advances to us, for they know well how important a thing to them is the friendship of Your Majesties'.

That did not prevent the French government from playing a dirty trick on the Spanish government: for the sum of eighty million francs it sold Louisiana to the United States, although, on surrendering it three years before, Spain had included in the bargain a right of preemption for herself. Charles IV was greatly annoyed and remarked to Godoy: 'You are now going to see the rascalities of these Frenchmen who have sold Louisiana to America. A thing like that buttresses our right to stay neutral, for they had passed their word to us not to sell it'.

To stay neutral in the struggle that was about to open between France and Great Britain – that was the major preoccupation of the King as well as of Godoy who, let it in fairness be said, seemed at this moment to be sincerely concerned for the interests of his country; he pushed on with the construction of roads and canals, encouraged public education, busied himself with the reorganisation of the army and, acting through a rather strange adventurer named Badia, went to the length of fomenting a plot at the Court of the Sultan of Fez with the object of securing a large-scale infiltration of Spain into Morocco. These were all things which would have to come to an end should the country again find itself dragged into a war against England.

As regards the latter, the Prince of the Peace tried to effect a little reinsurance. He talked several times to Frere, the British Ambassador, an agreeable man and quite a good sonneteer, and expressed himself well satisfied with the results. To the Queen he

wrote: 'The English have made me an immensely valuable offer and I cannot put it on paper. In sum, Madam, we find ourselves today encircled by kind attentions'. He did not for all that abandon the courtship of the French Ambassador; already he saw himself in the part of arbiter between the two powers.

But a battle of wits with Bonaparte and Talleyrand was not a pastime that could be indulged for long. On 18th May, Great Britain had declared war on France, and the French government demanded of Spain the implementation of the treaty of alliance of San Ildefonso; true enough, it consented provisionally to make no claim to troops and ships, but, in return, it made pressing demand for a subvention – to the tune of six million francs (gold) a month.<sup>1)</sup> This was a substantial sum and was bound to clean out the treasury now just beginning to fill up again; its payment would, moreover, entitle the English to blockade once more the Spanish coasts. Godoy refused it and had for his pains a violent scene with Beurnonville, in the course of which the Ambassador warned him that 'the First Consul had never been outwitted by anyone and would not let it be done to him by a favourite of the King of Spain'. The King, however, completely endorsed the favourite's refusal and, in a letter which Beurnonville was intended to see, wrote to him: 'My dear Manuel, I do not seek a quarrel with the First Consul and I am prepared to make every sacrifice which my dignity, my means and the interest of my people permit – I approve, dear Manuel, what you have written to Azara (the Spanish Ambassador at Paris) and for the rest I rely on your zeal, persuaded as I am that you will always be concerned only for my tranquillity and the prosperity of Spain'. This farrago of nobility, good nature, care for the public good and passion for his own tranquillity is Charles IV all over.

Godoy meanwhile was beginning to feel frightened, and he said to Frere, who was encouraging him to stand firm: 'The French have half a million men; if they demand passage across Spain, how can they be refused'? He did not give way for all that and offered a subvention of only two million a month.

Bonaparte then decided to make use of that verbal violence

<sup>1)</sup> Equivalent to about £ 3½ millions a year.

which had so often served him well, and directed at Azara a furious invective. On 14th August an ultimatum was delivered to the Madrid Court: if, by 7th September, the English Ambassador had not received his passports, an army of one hundred thousand Frenchmen would enter Spain. Beurnonville handed this ultimatum in the first place to the Prince of the Peace who, with tears in his eyes, dug in behind his Sovereign's will. 'Then it is you, Prince', said the Ambassador, 'who will be held responsible by the Spanish people for the calamities to which you are exposing your country', and he requested an audience of the King. This was granted him, but got matters no further, Charles IV confining himself to saying that such important matters could not be dealt with by word of mouth.

Failing to appreciate the King's personal obstinacy and believing Manuel to be the only obstacle to the realisation of his plans, the First Consul decided on the use of strong measures to bring Manuel down: a special envoy, Hermann, arrived at Madrid bearing a personal letter from the Head of the French government to the King of Spain. Mention was made in this letter of 'the species of dethronement in which the Prince of the Peace delights to represent his Sovereign' and it included pointed allusions to the relations obtaining between the Queen and the favourite.

Beurnonville was instructed to place this letter in the hands of Charles IV. 'You are forbidden,' wrote Talleyrand, 'to see or salute the Prince of the Peace, who is the enemy of the French people. Should he fail the King and France to the point of speaking, you would confine yourself to saying that you could not speak of the interests of France and Spain in the presence of the man who, at Badajoz, sold peace for eight million.'

Godoy had wind of these instructions. He sought out the French Ambassador at once, burst into sobs before him, cried out that 'this is not the way to treat a man who has married the niece of his King and rendered some services to his country' and offered to return to private life on condition that Spain was not obliged to depart from neutrality. Beurnonville was inflexible and insisted on personally handing to the King the letter from the First Consul.

But the Prince of the Peace was not a man to be caught napping. He saw Charles IV and rehearsed him in his part; on the day fixed for the audience the Ambassador was introduced into the presence of the King round whom were the Queen, Godoy and several high Court officials. So much formality somewhat staggered him; however, he handed to the King the terrible letter. Charles IV took it without opening it and, with the rather attractive simplicity that was part of his nature, told the Ambassador that he was ready for every sacrifice save that of parting with a man who acted honestly and whose society he required. He added, still without opening the letter, that he felt certain that his Ambassador at Paris would be able to arrange everything amicably; he then indicated by a sign that the audience was at an end. Beurnonville could do nothing else but retire, mumbling the compliments of protocol.

Godoy, not without a measure of courage, had done everything possible to avoid rupture with England and the matter now found itself referred to Paris. But Bonaparte was not the man to yield. He did not, to do him justice, insist either on an official declaration of war against Great Britain, or on the dismissal of the Prince of the Peace; all he stood out for was the six million a month. On 19th October 1803, Azara was forced to sign with Talleyrand a so-called treaty of neutrality under whose terms the Catholic King bought the at any rate nominal maintenance of neutrality with the much discussed six million a month, two of which, it is true to say, were to be applied to amortising the French debt to Spain.

Two months later, Talleyrand concluded with Souza, the Portuguese Minister at Paris whose wife had been his mistress, a similar treaty: Portugal promised, in consideration for the maintenance of her neutrality, to pay monthly, for sixteen months, one million francs to France.

Thenceforward the First Consul had in his hands the vital nerve of the war which he planned to fight to the end against Great Britain.

Godoy, whom the emotions of the last few months had much cast down, still hoped to prevent the opening of effective hostil-

ities between Great Britain and Spain. He recalled Azara from Paris and sent in his place, as *Chargé d'Affaires*, the banker Havas, with instructions not to be sparing in the matter of bribes. At the same time he had several conversations with Frere; but so great was his desire for a return to favour at the Tuileries that he reported them to Beurnonville, and, some time after, he had the mortification of seeing them printed at length in the French *Moniteur*. This happening much displeased the British Cabinet, who were further disquieted by the works in progress at some of the Spanish ports and now reckoned that open war with Spain would be better for them than a bogus neutrality. And, as from 10th May 1804, it was Pitt, with his cold and implacable energy, who again headed the British Cabinet.

On 5th October, four frigates of the Catholic King, which were on their way from Rio de la Plata to Cadiz loaded with nearly five million piastres in specie, were attacked without previous warning by some British ships, seized and brought to England. Europe in general regarded this happening as an outrage; Spanish pride was touched on the raw and the cry went up for vengeance. Charles IV would have preferred to procrastinate still further, but Godoy, who had been intriguing with Paris and had given some pledges in the process, was now an advocate of rupture. On 12th December, ten days after the coronation of Bonaparte as Emperor of the French, the King of Spain formally declared war on the King of England. On 20th December, Godoy, in his capacity as *generalissimo*, issued a proclamation to the army, in which, speaking of the English, he said: 'We will humiliate their intolerable pride. These flouters of the law of nations, these tyrants of the seas, shall die of rage before our eyes on the piles of goods which none will accept from them'. At the same time he declared to the French *Chargé d'Affaires* that 'he was ready to ride in person to Boulogne or anywhere else where the presence of Spaniards could further the Emperor's plans.' Though that was not quite what Napoleon wanted of him, these warlike utterances had an inflammatory effect on Maria Luisa who wrote to her Manuel: 'Your memory and fame shall end only with the world'.

On 8th January 1805, a maritime convention was concluded between France and Spain; in this was settled the strength of the fleet to be placed by Spain at France's disposal. The Court of Madrid had hoped that payment of the subventions would frank the provision of ships; now there had to be both subventions and ships.

Napoleon and Talleyrand had been too much for the Prince of the Peace. They had not overthrown him for all to see, but they had broken his resistance within, and now here he was, a docile instrument who, to keep his place and, possibly, his head, must needs now play the French game.



It was in the middle of 1804 that Godoy had started to nibble the bait. His inveterate weakness for intrigue had driven him to keep in France, independently of the Spanish Embassy, a personal representative, and the man he chose for the purpose was Eugène Izquierdo, naturalist and man of the world, between whom and himself botany formed a link and whom he had already used on secret missions. Izquierdo reached Paris in June and there made contact with Lacépède, a savant like himself but also Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour and, as such, often admitted to audience with the Emperor. Conversations started between the two men which, lasting over many months, were to enable Talleyrand to keep Godoy in play much as a fisherman plays a salmon that has taken his hook.

According to the Duchess of Abrantès, this unofficial envoy of the Prince was 'a Spaniard of hideous appearance and none too lovely soul', but he was an intelligent man, amused by his mission, to which he devoted himself with enthusiasm; there was no doubt in his mind as to its real purpose, which, at an early date, he summarised in a letter to Godoy: 'I have never forgotten our conversation in a room at Aranjuez. Every day it has been present to my mind, as it is now and will be always. I have a complete understanding of what is in Your Excellency's mind. Repose and tranquillity – that is what you chiefly need. Where is the guarantee of them to be had?' In other words, the French govern-

ment had to be persuaded to endow Godoy with some sovereign State in which, in the event of Charles IV's death, he and his ill-gotten wealth could be safe.

Izquierdo and Lacépède had an arrangement by which Godoy's letters to the former were shown by the latter to Napoleon, or to Talleyrand at any rate. On 12th January 1805, the Prince of the Peace, acting on advice, came out into the open and, in an elaborate letter, described himself as 'a soldier of few words but those truthful, a philosopher in his opinions, neither a boaster nor a groveller, modest but not timid, whose only ambition it is to preserve his country and merit the esteem of good men.' A sardonic smile must have lit up for a moment Talleyrand's inscrutable mask, when he read these lines!

On 21st January, Napoleon replied at no great length: 'The Prince shall never lack support against his enemies, external and internal.' Lacépède, in his covering letter to Izquierdo, went a little further: 'The Prince of the Peace will see that what the Emperor offers him is union of views and reciprocity of interests, always.'

These assurances, comprehensive as they were, were not precise enough to commit the French government very far. Such as they were, they rejoiced the heart of Manuel and promoted the success of the mission which General Junot, a companion-in-arms of the Emperor and lately appointed Ambassador at Lisbon, was commissioned to undertake at Madrid on his way through.

The essential purpose of this mission – disliked by Beurnonville whom Napoleon distrusted – was to hurry on the naval armaments of Spain. Napoleon was absorbed in his 'vast plan' for landing in England; to succeed, he thought, would be a matter of only twenty-four hours, or two tides. But during those twenty-four hours the British fleet must be tied down a long way off. Villeneuve's squadron was, therefore, to leave Toulon, sail through the straits of Gibraltar, pick up at Cadiz a part of the Spanish Fleet, draw Nelson's ships after it towards the Antilles, then turn sharply about towards the coast of Spain, disengage Ferrol and the squadron blockaded in it, and from there, at long last, set sail for the Channel. It was a condition of the plan's

success that there should be a large number of ships, well stocked arsenals and plenty of money. In his instructions of 23rd February Napoleon wrote to Junot: 'You will pay frequent visits to the Prince of the Peace; you will tell him that he has my confidence, that I no longer make the reserves in regard to him which were based on the suggestions of others, and that I will use the whole of my authority on his behalf; but one thing I expect from him: it is that the Spanish fleet be ready for the operations which I have in view'. And he added: 'If, after he had promised me that that would be done, it was not done, my plans would be compromised and the hatred and contempt which he would then draw on himself would be on the same scale as the esteem which he will win by behaving differently'. The iron hand beneath the velvet glove, as always.

In March, Junot, accompanied by his witty, tiresome wife and a brilliant suite, reached Madrid, where he was welcomed in a big way. Was he not the personal envoy and familiar friend of the great Caesar? Then too, did not he and the Frenchmen in his entourage represent grace, youth, elegance, glory – everything, in short, that was so sadly lacking in the gloomy and antiquated Court of Spain?

Mme. Junot, in her *Souvenirs d'une Ambassade en Espagne at au Portugal*, was later to jot down, with her usual combination of fun and malice, the impressions left by her first audience: 'Queen Maria Luisa was a good-looking woman, but there was something so unpleasantly offhand about her whole manner that it was impossible to come near her without a sense of discomfort at finding a Queen who was so little interested in pleasing and a woman who could not take the plunge of growing old.

'First and foremost, she dressed herself in the oddest way. On the day on which I saw her she had on a robe of yellow silk over which was another magnificent robe of English lace. She was bareheaded, and her Greek style of hairdressing was crowned by a garland of ivy studded with pearls. It was a strange toilette, if ever there was one, and never did she look as absurd as on that day. King Charles IV was going off to hunt as he did every day after dinner. He was booted and breeched and all ready to set off,

even though it was then only half past two. His toilette was as unusual as his wife's. He had on white breeches, blue and white stockings rolled up his leg, and an old threadbare coat not worth three piastres. I cannot refrain from praising the beauty of the Queen's arms, which really were quite perfect. She asked me several questions which I thought showed a fair amount of sense and affability of a sort. I could even have imagined myself in the presence of a Princess of the time of Louis XIV or Louis XV, though she was no Henrietta of England; compared with the latter she had neither good-sense nor elegance nor, even more conspicuously, beauty. She was most insistent on knowing whether the Empress Josephine wore roses or not, and whether, if she did, she wore white or red – it was, in short, one of the most comic conversations I have ever had in my life.

'But there was in the room another person, who deserves particular mention: this was the common favourite of the King and Queen – Don Manuel Godoy, Duke of Alcudia, Prince of the Peace, and one of the sorriest favourites Spain has ever had, unfortunate as she has been in that respect. At that time the Prince of the Peace may have been between thirty-eight and forty. His appearance was common in the extreme and he had the air of a coachman. His face might have been agreeable when he was young, but at the time I am speaking of he had grown so fat that nothing was still visible of the physiognomy which had charmed Queen Maria Luisa and caused her to commit so many follies.'

The 'coachman' did not 'spoil the ship' in his dealings with Junot. He was well paid in return and said delightedly to the Queen: 'I think the best of him, for he has already given me a Bréguet watch'<sup>1</sup>). Next, serious matters were taken up. On 26th March, the master's envoy handed to Godoy a memorandum containing the words: 'The Emperor places complete reliance on the zeal and energy of the Prince of the Peace. Much of the glory to be had from this expedition will fall to his share and my master assures him of his friendship and protection in everything. But in the ports there must be money, money and more money still.' Manuel promised everything and, finding himself now closely

<sup>1</sup>) Bréguet, Abraham Louis, 1747-1823, a famous watchmaker.

associated with the glories of Bonapartism, submitted to Junot a whole series of half-baked plans for possible expeditions to Ireland, Gibraltar, Jamaica, even India, to the accompaniment of diatribes against the Court of Naples and the Prince of the Asturias. The better to run to earth the partisans of the latter, he begged Junot to ask Fouché for a plan for the reorganisation of the Spanish police; on hearing this, Napoleon wrote in somewhat disdainful terms to Fouché: 'You may send a plan to the Prince of the Peace if you have a good one, but I have seldom known these plans to be good for anything.'

All the same, Godoy's activities were not limited to talking and planning: under his impulsion, the stocking of the arsenals and the arming of the ships went on apace and Talleyrand himself had to pay homage to 'the present activity of military preparations in Spain'. Cartagena armed eight ships and two frigates, Cadiz thirteen ships and Ferrol nine. The crews were, unfortunately, recruited in haste and had had no training, and the officers had had hardly any chance of handling a ship; while ropes, sails and riggings were all of poor quality. In short, more facade than substance. Decrès, the French Minister of Marine, wrote prophetically to Napoleon: 'I cannot escape from a feeling of apprehension whether all this eagerness on the part of General Beurnonville and the Prince of the Peace, neither of whom is going to sea himself, is not really directed to laying down ships with a view to paying court to Your Majesty while not concerning themselves with the type of seamen they will put on board them. These ships of theirs will certainly be beaten in anything like a hot fight.'

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The Emperor's plan, meanwhile, began to be put in execution. On 9th April, Villeneuve collected at Cadiz five ships and a frigate of the Catholic King, which were under the command of Admiral Gravina. And this combined fleet was now steering for the Antilles.

Even as, with all sails spread, it was cleaving the Atlantic swell, Godoy did not forget his personal designs and wrote to the faithful Izquierdo: 'Be careful not to lose sight of the real object of

your mission and beware of mirages!' The further he reflected, the clearer it seemed to him that his best course lay in seeking in Portugal the 'kingdom of his own', such as would at one blow satisfy his ambitions and calm his fears. Junot had just reached Lisbon; there he found a marked hostility on the part of the Prince Regent, who was most anxious not to break with England and kept up a disturbing correspondence with the Court of Naples and his sister-in-law, the Princess of the Asturias. Napoleon was much annoyed by it and had brought to Izquierdo's notice a letter which the secret service had intercepted; in this the Princess informed her mother, the Queen of Naples, that, if Charles IV died, Godoy would be arrested in half an hour. Manuel, whose resolve was strengthened by this piece of information, fanned the flames and pressed for war against Portugal; he wrote to Izquierdo: 'If His Imperial and Royal Majesty is seriously thinking of this project, I should like to be told it definitely.' Napoleon was in no hurry to answer: little the peace of mind of the Prince of the Peace mattered to him; his thoughts were on the Coalition forming on the continent and on Villeneuve's fleet which, having failed to find in the Antilles the expected reinforcements, had now stood out to sea towards Europe.

It was a fleet tired by its long voyage that now drew near the Spanish seaboard. But the British squadron of Admiral Calder was there before it. The encounter, which took place on 22nd July in a thick fog off Cape Finisterre, had no decisive result; in the course of it, however, two Spanish ships were captured, and Villeneuve decided to run for shelter first at Vigo, then at Corunna, and lastly at Ferrol where he was joined by ten additional ships of His Catholic Majesty's.

Napoleon now ordered his Admiral to sail for the Channel, but Villeneuve, nervous, uneasy and aware that Nelson was on his tracks, steered in the opposite direction for Cadiz, thus bringing down at a blow the 'vast project' of his master.

We now come to 21st October 1805: Villeneuve, stung to the quick by the Emperor's biting reproaches, decided to go out for all or nothing. Without confidence and almost without hope,

but determined at least to prove himself no coward, he weighed anchor from Cadiz with his twenty-one French ships and fifteen Spanish ships of Admiral Gravina. Near Cape Trafalgar he came upon Nelson's British fleet; this numbered only twenty-nine ships, but well manned and in good trim.

'England expects that every man this day will do his duty!' Battle was joined, with the English threatening to break the Franco-Spanish line in both the centre and rear; Villeneuve gave orders to tack about – a manoeuvre which plunged his line of battle into disorder; the battle was now a *mêlée*, and soon, over the waves and through the spindrift, nothing could be seen but individual combat, ship against ship.

When evening fell, Nelson was dead, but his enemies were in flight. To speak only of the Spaniards, Gravina, their commander, had been mortally wounded, one thousand of their sailors had perished, three of their ships had been sunk and three had been captured, among them the *Santissima Trinidad*, the largest ship of war in the world; the rest, riddled with cannon-balls and crippled, drifted helplessly off, and only four of them got back, with the greatest difficulty, to Cadiz.

The disaster, in saving England, sounded the knell of Napoleon's European dream. But that was for the distant future, and the fanfares for Austerlitz would prevent contemporaries – even Pitt himself – from hearing the doom pronounced. One thing all were aware of at once: the ruin of Spain as a great naval power. That meant that she was no longer a great power at all, for it was from an empire thousands of sea-miles away that she drew her prestige and her strength: between herself and this empire the links were thenceforward broken.

Charles IV, limited and pious as ever, received the shock with a resignation which may fairly be called greatness of soul.

Napoleon would soon declare to the *Corps législatif*: 'Bad weather has caused us to lose several ships in a battle which was rashly joined. I cannot congratulate myself too much on the attachment to the common cause which the King of Spain has shown in these trying circumstances.'

As for the prime mover in the policy which had ended in this

catastrophe, as for Godoy, he was too taken up with concern for his own egoistical interests to spare much thought for the interests of the State. He had just received the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour; that, for the time being, was consolation enough for his frivolous soul and his mind was entirely occupied in spinning fine phrases for flattering missives to the French Caesar.

But far across the sea, on the Atlantic's other shore, other cannonades would soon be heard in muffled antiphon to those of Trafalgar; and they would prelude the disappearance of Spanish rule over those distant lands and in the same blast, though Europe and even America knew it not, salute the approaching birth of new nations and the dawn of a new world.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *The dawn of a new world*

THE INDIES! Was ever a word more evocative, more stimulating and more indefinite? Even as coins become worn in the course of time in passing from hand to hand, so this word, from having aroused so many different illusions and cradled so many variable dreams, has long since lost all settled meaning. And it is only in our own day that it has found again, though incompletely, the meaning which it had of old: the Dutch still call 'Indies' the Sunda Islands and, for the English, the 'West Indies' signify the Antilles.

The word has, at the mere whim of explorers, served to designate, successively or simultaneously, countries which, taken together, constitute half the earth. But, in reality, it is, surely, not so much a geographical expression defining an area of land, as a magic formula, at the mere sound of which the air gives off spiced perfumes, the mind's eye catches the gleam of gold and precious stones heaped high, and puffs of wind, now cool, now burning, fan the cheeks, as they shiver the unseen palm trees.

But when Godoy ruled Spain the word had a precise meaning. It was the name for the whole of the American and Oceanic possessions of His Catholic Majesty.

Vast possessions they were, which stretched out over nearly one hundred degrees of latitude and one hundred and eighty degrees of longitude. They comprised: in North America, Mexico as she is today, together with the States – now beneath the star-spangled banner – of Texas, New Mexico, California, Arizona and Florida, as well as (between 1764 and 1800) the immense Louisiana; the whole of Central America, less the Moskito coast which was in English hands; the whole of South America, less Brazil and the Guianas; in the Caribbean sea, Cuba, Porto-Rico, one half of San Domingo and (up till 1802) Trinidad; lastly, in the Pacific, the Marianas, the Carolines and the Philippines. At

the start of the nineteenth century, the whole of this area was – according to Humboldt, whose figures are not, however, entirely trustworthy – peopled by about nineteen million inhabitants, of whom three and a quarter million were whites, eight hundred thousand negroes, seven and a half million American Indians, two and a half million Tagals from the Philippines and five and a quarter million half-breeds.

For local government purposes, this Gargantuan empire, the present of the *conquistadors* to their Sovereigns, was divided into four Viceroyalties and nine Captain-Generalships: New Spain, New Granada, Peru and Rio de la Plata were the Viceroyalties with Mexico City, Santa Fé de Bogota, Lima and Buenos Aires as their respective capitals; Guatemala, Venezuela, Chili, Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, Porto Rico, San Domingo and the Philippines were the Captain-Generalships.

Let us ignore the Philippines, which are so far away as to seem to belong to another universe: only once in every year did a single ship, the *Nao de la China*, sail from Atapulco, on the Mexican shore of the Pacific, slowly traverse the great ocean spaces, and discharge at Manila her cargo of arms, munitions, cultural appliances, seeds and woollen stuffs; also she brought there the several months' old mail from America and Spain, along with some officials, soldiers or missionaries. Then she set off on her return voyage to Mexico, loaded with silk and Chinese porcelains, spices and camphor, and having on board an occasional Spaniard who, having sailed the breadth of the Pacific, crossed on muleback the desert plateaux of Mexico, and scudded before the Atlantic storms, might at long last, sometimes in a matter of years, see again his native land. Not much trade could be done with only a single ship to do it. But it was not to trade that Spain had, since Philip II's time, been installed in the Philippines: rather it was, to raise the cross of Christ alongside the standard of Castile. In the Archipelago were no Spanish colonists and only a few soldiers, but a large number of monks; at need, it is true, these monks would shoulder the musket and halberd and, trailing their native flock behind them, go out to repel the Malayan pirates.

Spanish America, on the other hand, was, in the mother country's eye, essentially a colony for exploitation, using that word in its strict sense. The Spaniards meant to keep, if they could, their empire's riches for themselves alone; all manufacturing industry was forbidden the Indies; they must buy all manufactured products in metropolitan Spain; all foreign trade was prohibited except with Spain in Spanish ships; no foreign merchant might set up there in business. It was the 'colonial system' at its narrowest. Only in 1774 did the Minister Galvez, who had been making an inspection of New Spain, authorise the different parts of Spanish America to trade with one another. Only as from 1778 could Central and South America freely trade with all the Spanish ports. Only as from 1786 did New Spain enjoy the same facility. But, in Charles IV's reign, a plan, put forward by a Frenchman, La Bastide, for an interoceanic canal to pass by way of Lake Nicaragua, was rejected almost out of hand.

The object of the system was, first, to force the colonies to buy at the highest possible price goods which had either been manufactured in or passed through metropolitan Spain: indeed, before her war with England, she exported annually to the Indies Spanish goods worth one hundred and sixty million reals and re-exported goods worth one hundred and forty million. Conversely, it aimed at drawing away to Spain an increasing quantity of the precious metals. (Of these the mines of Peru and Mexico produced, taking one year with another, five hundred million reals' worth). The cargo of the galleons which, once or twice a year, formed a convoy and crossed the Atlantic under strong escort, constituted one of the Spanish Treasury's most profitable resources. The revenue which, on average, that Treasury drew from the Indies has been put at about one hundred million reals; the Viceroyalty of New Spain alone sent annually to the mother country six million piastres in specie. As a source of revenue, it was, unfortunately, too tangible and too easy to intercept: when Spain broke with Great Britain to satisfy France, her galleons no longer arrived, or not with the same regularity, and her finances paid the penalty.

The machinery of the system was, notwithstanding distance

and slowness of communications, entirely assembled, operated and controlled in metropolitan Spain herself. The Council of the Indies, with its seat at Madrid, and the administrative office with its seat at Seville, closely supervised the local authorities; the latter enjoyed autonomy only in a small group of subjects and were kept up to the mark by periodical visits of inspection. Furthermore, as from 1786, provincial intendants immediately responsible to the Council of the Indies were substituted for the Viceroy and Captain-Generals in everything that concerned financial and economic matters.

Nor was it only in commercial matters that the Spaniards of Spain – the ‘Peninsulars’ as they were called – treated the Indies as their personal monopoly; the system extended to administrative matters as well. Every position of the slightest importance or profit, from that of Viceroy or President of a Royal appeal court to that of clerk of the court or Customs auditor, was the Peninsulars’ private preserve; not only the Indians and the half-breeds, but even the creoles themselves – that is to say, the whites born in the colonies – were, with few exceptions, excluded from them. And only too often the administration of these privileged persons was a venal one. The Mexican Indians used to place a few small coins in the coffins of their dead, for, as they said, Saint Peter, being a Spaniard, would never open the gates of Paradise with an ungreased palm. So too, the bishoprics and the substantial benefices, with the considerable revenues attached to them – the wealth of the Church of the Indies came to a million reals – remained always the appanage of the Peninsulars; the creoles and, still more, the half-breeds had to content themselves with suitably rewarded curacies or with parishes situated in the wilder parts. Yet, in, for example, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, only eighty thousand Peninsulars were to be found, and those all concentrated in the cities, as against one million creoles and five million half-breeds and Indians.

The creoles were descended either from the *conquistadors* or from immigrants of more recent date, and quite a number of them were rich and educated. They lived in noble style on their vast estates on which a crowd of negro slaves and Indian peons

did the work of cultivation; there they constituted a landed aristocracy which was somewhat vain, grossly extravagant and a little slapdash, but cultivated in mind and generous of soul. They felt themselves to be as well born as and better educated than these Peninsulars who put on airs of contempt for them, and their exclusion from public office was a grievous wound to their pride; ribbons and decorations, titles of nobility, colonelcies of militia were thrown to them to keep them quiet, but these did not satisfy, and the creoles, who had not failed to note the example of the insurrection of the thirteen North American colonies, had as their aim, starting with the last thirteen years of the eighteenth century, to claim, not yet indeed their independence, but a large share in the government of their native land. Sometimes they provided their children with French tutors who, notwithstanding the Inquisition, brought in their luggage volumes of the *Encyclopaedia*. Sometimes they sent their sons on a tour of Europe and these returned with ideas very subversive of the established order in the Indies, or, as they were already starting to say, America.

Not everything, however, by any means was bad in this order. And homage is due to the colonising genius which enabled a handful of Spaniards to bring the reign of peace and prosperity, relatively at any rate, to vast areas of the earth's surface, beneath what was often an almost deadly sky and in the midst of natural surroundings that were generally hostile. The epic of the first *conquistadors* is known to fame. Less so are the epics of the soldiers who, at the start of the nineteenth century, were still waging hard and unending war against the Araucanian Indians amid the nitrous deserts of Chile, of the planters who won for cultivation vast stretches of virgin forest or treeless plain, of the engineers who drove roads across the eternal snows of the Andes or the swampy forests of Central America, of the Franciscan monks who, right up to the North of California, founded missions which met with periodical devastation from the Redskins: yet all these too are worthy to be sung.

So much effort brought tangible results: if the very principle of government denied all place to industry, other than that of

craftsmen and, naturally, miners, agriculture on the other hand was in full spate of development (except in Paraguay where the expulsion of the Jesuits had dealt it a mortal blow). No longer was it thought enough, as at the start it was, to give preference to, (along with the exploitation of valuable types of timber), the cultivation of sugar, cocoa, indigo, cochineal and tobacco; by this time cereals from Europe had been introduced on the plateaux, and, with every step taken by colonisation into the upper valleys of Mexico and across the Argentine pampa, herds of horses, horned animals and sheep grew and multiplied. In the lands of the Plata alone the cattle were put at eighteen million head and the horses at three million.

The towns were infrequent, but several of them were well-built and fairly populous: Mexico City numbered three hundred and thirty-five thousand inhabitants, of whom sixty-five thousand were whites, and could show, around its main square, some imposing public buildings; Havana, Lima, Santa Fé de Bogota and others too, all wore a charming appearance, with their houses painted either a delicate rose, or an almond green, or ochre, or sepia, their inner courts in Andalusian style, their balconies and grills of wrought iron, their many churches writhing upwards and displaying in all directions volutes in the Indian style – churches that had a fresh and somewhat pagan air; each with its own Virgin according to the province, town or even quarter glittering in the light of candles – Peninsulars' Virgins, creoles' Virgins, Indians' Virgins, even negroes' Virgins.

Carriages were rare in the narrow streets of these colonial cities and Don Manuel Amat, Viceroy of Peru from 1761 to 1776, gave great offence by presenting his mistress, Micaela Villegas called the *Périchole*, a popular singer, with a carriage. In 1806 the bewitching *Périchole* was still living, but was now a very devout old woman who mostly frequented the chapels of convents. The good people of Lima consoled themselves for her retirement by applauding other actresses, by playing on guitars beneath balconies, by organising processions, by going to *corridos*, by quarreling over questions of precedence and by cursing the authorities. At Mexico City intellectual life was thriving; in addition

to the University, there was a School of Mines, a Botanical Garden and an 'Academy of the noble Arts'. Havana resembled the prettiest cities of Spain, but excelled them in flowers and scents; there, good society, far-famed for the beauty of its women, looked on itself as being as much 'peninsular' as American.

Everywhere was a moving and gracious imitation of Spanish life, reaching across stormy seas, impenetrable forests and inaccessible peaks; it was an imitation which exoticism, the silent Indians, the laughing negro slaves, the spacious life, the latent dangers and the vastness of the distances endowed with something new, something piquant and something strong.

Buenos Aires was a town of another type. The Rio de la Plata, of which it was the capital, was the latest in date of the American Viceroyalties – it was created only in 1776 and had before that been governed from Lima. Buenos Aires, it is true, goes back to 1616, but, in 1778, it still had only twenty-five thousand inhabitants and by 1805 had reached only forty-five thousand. It contained hardly any aristocracy of birth, such as could be seen at Lima or at Mexico City, but rather a rich bourgeoisie of big landed proprietors; it was before all else an agricultural and commercial entrepot. Its appearance was in keeping, lacking any general plan and any buildings worth speaking of, other than the cathedral, the ancient college of the Jesuits and the Hotel de Ville; the narrow streets were dusty when not muddy; the houses were one-floor affairs, rather like the country *ranchos*, with enormous roofs covered with branches; there were enclosures for the cattle, and bazaars and cabarets to which the cowboys of the pampa came to buy arms, or drink to the sound of dirge-like songs; docks too, and a few shops along the quays of the Rio with its sea-green waters. The general effect was that of a very large village, not a city, and the splendid future of the Argentine capital was still hidden. Yet, already, merchandise worth a million and a half piastres annually left its port and its merchants wore the air of wealthy bourgeois.

Outside the cities, the style of existence varied, naturally, with the latitude. But, nearly everywhere, exploitation took for the most part the form of the very large estate – *hacienda* in Mexico,

the island plantations and New Granada, *estancia* in the Argentine – sometimes the size of a province. Each of these domains was like a little autarchic kingdom which was almost entirely self-sufficient. At the centre, in a large dwelling house surrounded by out-houses and flanked by a chapel, lived the master, usually a creole, and his family. There, through the medium of intendants and foremen, he held sovereign sway over a whole people of workers: artisans and cowboys, Indian peons and negro slaves. The last named, very numerous in the islands, Central America and the Southern part of North America, were less so in New Spain and much less so in the Rio de la Plata and Chile.

There were good masters and there were very hard ones. The Indian, a silent, enigmatic dreamer, usually accepted their authority with resignation; respectful to the clergy, he practised Christianity with every appearance of devotion, but in his heart, no doubt, continued to worship the protecting animal of his tribe. He was, in theory, free, and the system of 'indentures and apporportionments', which had proved a real slavery in practice, had been, along with forced labour, abolished in law; in fact the peon was tied to the land where he worked, away from which it would hardly have been possible for him to find employment. The place where his servitude was worst, his treatment harshest and his lot most wretched, was beyond question the royal mines. From time to time his normal docility gave place to an explosion of anger, and revolts followed such as the one which, under the leadership of Tupac Amaru, a 'son of the sun' and descendant of Inca kings, caused much bloodshed in Peru from 1780 to 1782; these revolts were savagely repressed. Tupac was quartered at Cuzco, and the Indian resumed thereafter his work and his millenary dreaming.

Special mention should be made of the gauchos of the Rio de la Plata. These shepherd-horsemen, half-breeds for the most part, formed a race apart, with its own customs, dress, folklore, poetry and language, which was a debased Castilian studded with Indian words. They lived in the saddle – it would be almost true to say, were born in it – and, in their endless rides across the pampa, contracted habits of a fierce independence. Woo to him who

should try to discipline them: a knife-thrust or a gun-shot would quickly punish the rash intruder. For the gauchos, there was neither master nor even superior: only the employer. They were, however, capable of both zeal and fidelity, and would, in the service of the *caudillos* (leaders) when they fought each other for power in Argentina, constitute a cavalry which, though undisciplined, was formidable.

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The Spanish Indies were a world of their own. Small surprise then if, at a time when it took several months to go from Cadiz, not only to Buenos Aires, but to Vera Cruz, the attempt to govern them from Madrid proved in the long run impracticable. Godoy, who sometimes showed traces of foresight, was conscious of this and, taking up a project put forward in 1783 by the Count of Aranda, then Ambassador at Paris, had worked on a new system which would have transformed the great spaces of the Indies into autonomous States, beneath the rule of hereditary Viceroys who should be vassals of the Castilian crown; these august persons were to be chosen from among the Infantes of Spain or, possibly, the members of his own family; at need, he might find there a possible haven for himself, for the crying need for security in dignity never ceased to torment him. The plan came to nothing, nor did he press it very hard; it offended too many interests in metropolitan Spain, and Manuel contented himself with giving for a time the Viceroyalty of New Spain – the richest of them – to his brother-in-law, the Marquess of Branciforte.

Meanwhile, advances in prosperity brought with them an advance in discontent in several creole circles, not, it is true, many in number but wealthy and active, and the idea took shape that the vast territories of Spanish America could not for ever be exploited mainly for the benefit of a handful of Peninsulars. Notwithstanding the example of the United States, there was no question yet of republicanism, hardly of separatism. The goal envisaged – a goal implicit in the ideas of Aranda and Godoy – was of separate kingdoms linked to Spain by a federal tie.

The inertia of the Peninsular authorities had already brought

to birth several attempts to realise this ideal by force. In 1750, some Peruvian creoles and half-breeds had hatched a plot with the object of restoring the empire of the Incas, the beneficiary to be either a descendant of these last or a white born in the colony.

In 1780, an attempted insurrection had occurred in Chile, under the leadership of two Frenchmen, Gramusset and Berney. In 1784, there was another disturbance in Peru, to which the British Cabinet, ever on the watch for trouble to foment in Spanish America, gave encouragement; according to a plan of which traces exist in the British archives, a monarchical State would have been set up covering the area from the equator to Patagonia; liberal institutions would have been conferred on it and slavery would have been abolished there; the name of its ruler-to-be is wrapped in mystery – he was referred to as Don Juan and all that is known of him is that he was a Spaniard of noble birth. The reaction of the creoles to the excesses committed by the Indians in revolt consigned this plan to oblivion.

But one creole at least there was who remained passionately devoted to the work of liberation: General Miranda.

Francisco Miranda was born in 1752 at Caracas on the burning shores of the Caribbean sea, in a milieu of opulent and hot-headed planters to whom the Peninsulars were anathema. Miranda, having become a soldier, had, during the American War of Independence, served in the Spanish corps which formed part of the army of Rochambeau. There he was initiated into Freemasonry and became a devotee of liberal ideas. Crossing to Europe, he travelled about, came to London where he was presented to Pitt, visited Paris in 1791, made friends with Brissot and Pétion, served in the French Army and, thanks to the backing of his Girondin friends, was made a General in the army of Dumouriez; in 1793, he took Antwerp and became commander-in-chief. But in a short time he was denounced to the Convention, relieved of his command and, though acquitted, finally freed only after 9th Thermidor. Continuing to dabble in politics, he was proscribed on 18th Fructidor and fled to England. From there, in an attempt to enlist the support of the President of the United States, he sent him a plan for organising Spanish America as a parlia-

mentary monarchy. Returning to Paris in 1801, he met again there a young compatriot, Bolivar by name, then a pupil at the Polytechnic School; soon he was suspected by the Consular police of being concerned in 'the infernal machine plot', so called, and had again to find asylum in London. There, the British Cabinet naturally did not neglect this refugee of note, a distinguished General, adversary of Napoleon, bitter enemy of Godoy and the Franco-Spanish alliance, and who had important contacts in Spanish America. William Pitt, back in power, promised to furnish him with the wherewithal to raise Venezuela in revolt against Castilian domination; at the same time, a British expedition was got ready against the Rio de la Plata. The Prime Minister was not, of course, concerned with freeing the creoles and Indians, but his calculation was that the two-fold operation would, if it succeeded, enfeeble Spain, ally of France, and assure to Great Britain naval bases and no less important commercial outlets. Before, however, it could be carried out, he was dead.

With the gold given him by Pitt Miranda chartered at New York a frigate, a schooner and two corvettes, and recruited some bravos. With these forces he appeared on 19th April 1806 before Caracas and disembarked in the neighbourhood. But the affair had been ill prepared, the 'liberator's' friends were afraid of seeing a mere substitution of British domination for Castilian, and the Spanish authorities reacted vigorously. Ten of Miranda's companions were taken and hung; he himself escaped with difficulty and fled to the island of Trinidad, lately become an English possession. He was executed in effigy in the town of his birth, but he was not discouraged and tried three further disembarkations. His handful of men was, however, decisively beaten by the Spanish troops assisted by the French garrison of Guiana, and, with rage but not despair in his heart, he found himself forced to await a more favourable opportunity.

Meanwhile, an English squadron, under the command of Admiral Popham, had steered for the Rio de la Plata and made its way up it. On the Northern side lay Montevideo, a strongly fortified place used to keep at a respectful distance the Portuguese of Brazil; on the South side lay Buenos Aires which had a gar-

ri son of only some fifty regular soldiers and about four hundred militiamen. In addition, there were stationed in the bay two schooners, two gunboats and three armed smacks, commanded by ship's captain Jacques de Liniers, a Frenchman who had entered the service of Spain in 1774 and had been employed in America for a period of fifteen years. The Viceroy, the Marquess of Sobremonte, had written fourteen times to Godoy asking for reinforcements, but the latter had not favoured him with more than one answer, and that only told him that he must rely entirely on his resources on the spot.

The British ships stood in for Buenos Aires. Sobremonte, who had lost his head, was already talking of surrender. But Liniers, a brave and energetic man, made him keep silence and organised resistance. The English, under General Beresford's command, were superior in both numbers and armament. Four leagues upstream from the city they successfully disembarked and wiped out, after a gallant resistance, the militiamen who opposed them. The Viceroy fled to Cordoba and, on 28th June 1806, Buenos Ayres capitulated. The invaders found in it a treasure of four million piastres which they sent to England. The clergy gave them a friendly reception and presented Beresford with an address in which appeared the passage: 'Although the fall of the government beneath which a people has been formed may be, in principle, a very great misfortune for that people, it is a misfortune which has often proved a springboard to glory for it. We shall not risk prediction as to the destiny awaiting you, but we feel assured that we shall find consolation for the loss which has just come upon us in the benevolence of the English government.'

Liniers, who had managed to get away, returned to the city disguised, if we may trust Godoy's *Memoirs*, as a peasant; secretly he passed the word round the notables that a counter-attack would be attempted and then crossed to Montevideo to prepare it. By arrangement with Don Pascal Ruiz Huidobro, Governor of Montevideo, he collected several ships and put himself at the head of a small body of men, composed of Spanish regulars, a few Customs officers and seventy-three French sailors:

'If, as I hope', he told his men, 'we succeed in conquering the enemies of our country, remember, soldiers, the Spanish tradition: to fight bravely and triumph humanely.' Crossing to the Southern bank of the Rio, he was joined by several volunteers and, on 12th August, the English were beaten in a battle waged in the very heart of Buenos Aires and laid down their arms.

The citizens of the town acclaimed the valiant captain and by a vote, which the Viceroy found himself compelled to ratify, entrusted him with all powers civil and military. True to his promise, he treated the English prisoners with the greatest generosity, and let them go free on parole; he informed Napoleon of his victory in a message in which he declared that 'though having all but lost the use of his native tongue, at least he had still the feelings of a true son of France'; lastly, he organised on a basis of voluntary enlistments a small army of militiamen whom he subjected to a rigorous discipline. The following year, this army, backed by the energetic efforts of the civil population and after a bloody battle in the streets, triumphed over yet another British expedition, though much stronger than its predecessor, and Liniers became, for all that the Peninsular element gave him some occasional trouble, the idol of the creoles for quite a time.



These happenings were proof, it might have seemed, of the attachment of the Spanish colonies to metropolitan Spain. In actual fact, they prepared the way for their independence.

In Venezuela, the efforts of Miranda, ill-conceived and badly executed though they were, aroused none the less much sympathy among his compatriots – sympathy that was to show itself in an active autonomist propaganda, conducted, with the help of British money, throughout the length and breadth of New Granada.

In the districts of the Plata, again, the inhabitants took note of the fact that, in face of the invader, they had been left to their own devices. No reinforcement had arrived from Spain, the Peninsular authorities had proved themselves unequal to their task and the army which Liniers had created was mostly composed of creoles and half-breeds, with even some Indians and ne-

groes in its ranks. Liniers himself, with an authority derived, not from the Catholic King, but from the citizens, had, for a moment, taken the part of independent chief.

When to that is added that many of the English who had been taken prisoners stayed in the country on release, and there became active exponents of the doctrines of commercial liberty – doctrines so favourable to the interests of the creoles – it is not surprising that, appearances to the contrary, the year 1806 marked the awakening of a real national feeling in the Spanish Indies.

From that moment, 'Indies', the word, no longer finds a place in public speeches. 'Spanish America' – that is the name henceforward. There, if Godoy was generally hated, King Charles IV was still respected; before many years had passed, however, the talk would always be of the 'Republics of Latin America'.

The favourite, meanwhile, was too busy to concern himself much with what was happening in those distant lands which were, for him, hardly more than reservoirs of precious metals, and places whereon to dump needy solicitors for public office. His mind was entirely occupied with the intrigue by which he hoped to win, along with a 'sovereign state' of his own, the security he so passionately desired. He did not see that already he was caught in toils from which he could nevermore break loose, and that what was approaching was not his accession to a throne but his downfall, and with his own the downfall of the realm which feeble hands had entrusted to his keeping.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Wanted, a Crown*

THE DAYS that followed Austerlitz saw Europe prostrate before Napoleon. Russia had asked an armistice; Austria had sued for peace; Prussia had converted into grovelling congratulations the ultimatum which it had been in her mind to send to France, and had signed with her a humiliating treaty. What remained of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire was going up in smoke, to be followed by the Confederation of the Rhine with Napoleon for protector. 'France', said Metternich, 'exercises over Western Europe an influence which it is for the time being impossible to destroy. No opposition can be made to a federal system of the West with France at its head.' The master of Europe passed his time in overthrowing ancient thrones and had, in a disdainful phrase, just informed the world that 'the dynasty of Naples had ceased to reign'. With the seas for protection, the British ship alone held on her course, but her pilot, William Pitt, worn out and overwhelmed, had been stricken with the despair that killed him.

More and more the Prince of the Peace gave proof, not only of devotion, but of servility: 'My predictions have been fulfilled', he wrote to the Emperor, 'and the great actions of Alexander, Caesar and Charlemagne have turned to things of nought. History will be able to show nothing finer than Your Majesty's lofty deeds.' He had not, perhaps, been a stranger to the decision which had deprived the brother of his own King of the crown of Naples; indeed, he had, in the same letter, denounced a plot which was supposed to have been hatched between Queen Caroline of Naples and her daughter, the Princess of the Asturias, and had had for object the assassination of the Spanish Sovereigns and Godoy himself. Napoleon answered in a few lines: 'Nothing that the Queen of Naples does astonishes me. I have, however, shuddered on the mere reading of your letter.' Joseph Bonaparte

had been appointed to succeed Ferdinand the Bourbon on the throne of Naples.

And now, by a singular coincidence, the Princess of the Asturias came to her death-bed. Undermined as she was by tuberculosis and miscarriages, she had been gravely ill for several months. But, in addition, she was an object of loathing to Maria Luisa who, in a letter to the sympathetic Godoy, referred to her daughter-in-law as 'that offscouring of her mother, that poisonous viper, that animal bursting with spleen and venom in place of blood, that half-dead toad, that diabolical serpent.' This hatred of hers was public knowledge and when, on 21st May 1806, the Princess died at just over twenty-three years of age, no one believed in a death from natural causes; Escoiquiz, her husband's former tutor, made no bones about declaring: 'The sausage merchant has poisoned her' – sausages being the speciality of Badajoz, Manuel Godoy's birthplace.

The latter realised that reconciliation was no longer possible between himself and the heir to the throne. Therefore, he must at all costs find some shelter from the blasts of this animosity, must at all costs obtain from Napoleon the 'sovereign state' of his dreams. The moment seemed favourable: Napoleon tossed about thrones and half-thrones much as other monarchs distributed ribbons and crosses. The favourite sent his confidant, Izquierdo, on another journey to Paris, and, still by way of Lacépède, got another message through to Caesar: 'My security,' he wrote, 'turns on the Emperor's protection. I may survive that great misfortune, the death of my Sovereigns, but, before that terrible moment comes, I am bound to assure myself of an existence which no violence can reach. I am ready to become the object of His Imperial Majesty's bounty and favour and also, provided that it is in conformity with His views, to be one element in the great political system which is to give back peace to Europe and secure to the world the freedom of the seas. Any suggestion of His Imperial Majesty will meet with acceptance from our Sovereigns.'

Surely a sarcastic smile must have curled Talleyrand's lips when news reached him – and all news did reach him – of this anguished

missive. 'So! the celebrated Manuel, the true master of Spain and the Indies, is really no better than a puppet, whose strings we can pull from Paris in our own time. Let us not discourage him – he may always be useful. But, naturally, do not let us be in a hurry to satisfy him. The man is unbalanced and it is not on pillars made of such material as his that the new Europe must, if it is to last, be made to rest.' On Talleyrand's advice, Napoleon confined himself to saying in reply that the solicitations of the Prince of the Peace seemed to him lacking in precision and that he must set out his requirements more clearly.

Thus put up against the wall, Godoy lost his head a little. In a breathless series of notes brought to Izquierdo hard on each other's heels by messengers galloping their hardest, he propounded one by one, though without deciding between them, most of his old plans: regency of Spain, rank of Infante, regency of Portugal, principality and even kingdom to be carved out of the last-named country. In the end, the confidant wrote to him in some irritation: 'Like Caesar, Your Excellency stands on the bank of the Rubicon; either cross it and escape from the present situation, or give up the whole attempt. Unless the Emperor receives firm proposals, unless he gets categorical answers to his specific questions, negotiations are as good as at an end.'

Poor Manuel! We can see him on receipt of this summons to decision turning redder than usual, sponging his forehead, going to take advice from the Queen, discussing the matter with Pepita Tudo – and still hesitating. At last he came to a decision; it must most decidedly be Portugal that had to bear the cost of his ambition and, on 24th March 1806, he sent Izquierdo a plan with instructions to get it to Napoleon; but there were two alternatives even to this plan: in the one case, Godoy would go to Lisbon to take over the regency; in the other, he would receive a sovereign principality formed at the southern extremity of the Spanish-Portuguese frontier and stretching right to the Atlantic.

Hardly had the courier gone when Godoy felt an itch to amend his plan. Fresh horses and new relays appeared like magic, and another messenger was sent off. The proposal this time was for disposing of the whole of Portugal: Manuel to have the southern

part and the northern part to go to the Infante Francisco de Paula, known in the heralds' office as Charles IV's third son but with some probability the child of his favourite. And at the last moment Manuel still found time for a postscript: Portugal could, if necessary, be cut up into four States, two for Godoy and Francisco de Paula, the third for the Infante Don Carlos, and the fourth as a crumb of comfort for the actual Portuguese Regent, the Prince of Brazil, the Infanta Carlotta's husband.

Napoleon and Talleyrand now had what they needed. The Prince of the Peace had given himself away and was now helplessly in their power. There was no more need for hurry. The reply did no more than ask Godoy how he envisaged the operation against Portugal. Would Spain undertake it alone? or would she ask for French troops to help her? Meanwhile, the Madrid government was called on to pay at once the sum of twenty-four million francs, being the arrears on the subventions due to France.

The finances of Spain were in any case grievously embarrassed. The Navy, the Army and the Court ran away with terribly large sums, while the British blockade prevented the Mexican and Peruvian piastres from arriving. Everything had been tried – increases in taxation, orders to the clergy to make ever more generous 'voluntary gifts', conversion of Treasury Bills into legal tender – in vain: the Budget deficit was still running at more than a million reals and the Treasury was empty. No matter; Godoy strained every nerve to appease Napoleon. There were further sales of ecclesiastical property; the Hope Bank of Amsterdam promised a new loan on very onerous terms; on 10th May 1806, a financial agreement was reached satisfactory to France, not without Talleyrand having charged *en route* a modest commission.

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Meanwhile, at Lisbon, the draught was beginning to be felt. Izquierdo's intrigues had not remained entirely hidden, and Paris and Madrid both seemed in surly mood. The Prince of Brazil, neurasthenic Regent for a mad Queen, hardly concerned himself with public affairs. But Araujo, his minister, bestirred himself and deemed it politic, on the occasion of Talleyrand's being made

Prince of Benevento, to clothe his congratulations in a parcel of Brazilian topazes and several barrels of very old Port.

Whatever the reason, whether it was the effect of these presents or, more probably, because, Pitt being dead, Talleyrand, who wanted peace, now saw a chance of negotiations with Great Britain, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs seemed obstinately indifferent to giving Godoy any early satisfaction.

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The conversations with Izquierdo went on, but now a new intermediary was taken into them in place of Lacépède: Duroc, Grand Marshal of the Palace. Some time was lost in bringing him up to date. And then, all of a sudden, French diplomacy came out with a quite unexpected demand – nothing less than the dethronement of the Queen of Etruria, (Queen-Regent since the death of her husband), Charles IV's second daughter. Spain had in other days made heavy sacrifices that this Infanta might have a crown, but now Napoleon needed Florence and Livorno to round off his 'Italian system', and he was not the man to bother about the family feelings of his faithful ally, the Catholic King.

So, in June, Talleyrand notified Izquierdo that, if it was to succeed, the scheme for the partition of Portugal must be remodelled, and the north of the country must go to compensate the daughter of the King of Spain for the Etruria which she had to hand over to France; Godoy could still have his principality in the south, and Charles IV would be suzerain of the whole and could, if he liked, take the title of Emperor; the Braganza dynasty would be packed off to Brazil. Talleyrand suggested also, though not insistently, that Spain should give up to France the little port of Passajes, between San Sebastian and the Spanish frontier. The truth was that the newly created Prince of Benevento, now in the throes of his negotiations for peace with England, aimed at giving himself room for manoeuvre.

Manuel, now in the position of Tantalus, sensed it and was much upset. 'I have said from the beginning', he wrote to Izquierdo, 'that, if peace is made, the Portuguese plan is off. Your

answer was: I know the Emperor; whatever he promises, he will do. Well, what is the result? I had foreseen it.' Fears for Spain now started to take their place beside his personal preoccupations: 'If my country is safeguarded,' he told his agent, 'if our Sovereigns are left in the integrity of their domains, then we shall have escaped the most perilous reef.' At his end, too, Izquierdo felt disquiet growing on him and he answered Godoy: 'Lima (the Portuguese Minister at Paris), who was feeling sorry for himself a short time ago, now radiates happiness and goes about saying: Now we are saved; Spain will not escape as lightly as we shall.' A little later he was writing: 'The friends of Lucien think that, in a year from now, he will be King of Spain.'

Godoy left no straw unclutched. An officer attached to the Council of State, Prosper de Barante, conveyed to the Spanish Sovereigns Napoleon's condolences on the death of the Princess of the Asturias; Manuel fêted this Imperial messenger in every possible way and treated him to the delectable spectacle of Charles IV turning on and off, for the amusement of his good people, the great fountains of San Ildefonso. The young officer remained unimpressed: 'Unable as I am,' he wrote, 'to recognise in Godoy either a great minister or a clever politician, his rise is due in my view not to his being a statesman but to his being a parvenu.'

Barante, however, was a negligible enough person himself. A much more important one was Murat, brother-in-law of the Emperor, and Murat, as it happened, felt an interest in the wife of a French banker, Michel by name, who was in difficulties with the Spanish government. The Prince of the Peace smoothed out these difficulties and made Murat a present of 'peach-coloured' horses and some merinos. But Murat had little influence with his brother-in-law and still less with Talleyrand. And Godoy, feeling that his prey was more than ever elusive, and now in a state of irritated disillusionment, made Izquierdo the recipient of his spleen: 'Trials,' he wrote to him, 'uncertainty, dangers and darkness, with these does our ally reward us for our sincerity. If that ally not only leaves Spain in the mess into which he has dragged her but is thinking still of depriving her of provinces,

the prime responsibility for what happens will rest on you, though it is I who shall be sacrificed to your naïveté.'

Just at that moment the Franco-British conversations had reached an impasse, while Charles Fox, their inspirer, had joined his old rival, Pitt, in the grave. A like failure had befallen the conversations begun on parallel lines between St. Petersburg and Paris, the Tsar having refused to ratify the agreement concluded by his negotiator. The result was the fourth Coalition, with Prussia seeming resolved to play in it the leading part. Godoy, who shared the admiration felt by all soldiers for the Prussian army, considered a Prussian victory to be at any rate on the cards. He now began to ask himself whether coming down on the Napoleonic side had not always been a mistake; and in his tortuous brain the idea of a change of camp took shape.

Still maintaining his contacts with Paris, he provided himself with an agent at London; made friendly advances at Madrid to Henry, the Prussian Chargé d'affaires, and friendlier still to Strogonoff, the Russian Ambassador, whom he met often in the anglophile salon of the young and charming Countess of Ega, wife of the Portuguese Ambassador. In this circle, which the number of pretty faces made very much to his taste, Manuel recovered both assurance and optimism – could even start bragging again: 'We have one hundred and eighty thousand men of all arms,' he confided to Strogonoff, 'and a war, even if we took the offensive, would not frighten us as long as the enemy was well occupied in the North.' And, notwithstanding the emptiness of the Treasury, he pushed on with placing the Spanish army on a war footing.

The news of the capture of Buenos Aires by the English, which reached Spain on 30th September, confirmed the Prince of the Peace in the conviction that the French alliance, so disappointing for him, was absolutely ruinous for Spain. On 1st October, he formally declared to Strogonoff: 'Let us form a triple alliance between Russia, England and Spain, which will be joined by the American powers; then we shall have a make-weight against the gigantic projects of the French tyrant.' As an additional attraction, he put forward the idea of a marriage

between the Grand Duchess of Russia and Francisco de Paula, then only thirteen years old but who, Manuel said, 'has much native wit and much vivacity, I will even say genius'. Decidedly, he had a father's heart for this child.

On 7th October, Godoy went a step further: he signed a manifesto to the Spanish nation, issued on the 14th, which amounted to a call to arms: 'In even less perilous circumstances than those of today, the faithful vassals strove to aid their Sovereigns with their goods and their resources. Come then, my well-loved fellow-countrymen, come and swear allegiance beneath the banners of the most beneficent of Sovereigns, come and I will cover you with the folds of my gratitude. If my voice be powerless to waken in you the desire for glory, then hearken to that of your immediate protectors, that of the fathers of the people to which I speak; let their voice bring home to you what duty, honour and the sacred religion you profess alike require of you.'

The name of the adversary escaped mention in this piece of bombast but everyone in Spain knew it: Napoleon. The country's enthusiasm, though running less deeply than in 1793, was real enough for all that: in the salons of Madrid young men blossomed out in uniforms and received for their pains ribbons in the national colours at the hands of the fair; ribbons of the same hues decorated the baskets of the orange-sellers; coffee-house poets scribbled patriotic verses; many of the poorer classes, and bourgeois too, enrolled in the militia; monks and priests made in their sermons unfriendly allusions to the Emperor of the French.

It was he whom Manuel had in mind. But not without reservations. His involved and hesitant nature made him avoid, whenever he could, committing himself beyond recall. After all, he said to himself, the fortune of war had not yet decided between the Emperor and the Coalition, and he wanted, at need, to be able to say that he had been misunderstood and that the enemy denounced in his manifesto was not France but Portugal, who had at that moment just allowed a British squadron to enter the Tagus.

Inglorious as the loophole was, it proved opportune: the month was not out before news of the battles of Jena and Auerstädt struck Madrid like a clap of thunder. The army that was heir to the Frederician traditions lay crushed: Prussia was at the mercy of the invincible Corsican.

At first Godoy was overwhelmed, but the habit of dissimulation came to his aid. On 4th November, he declared to Vandeul, the French Chargé d'Affaires, that he looked on France's triumphs as Spain's no less, and added: 'Before leaving for Germany, His Majesty the Emperor informed me of his plans; the forces that Spain, his faithful ally, was making ready for him are still at his disposal. Where would His Majesty like them to move to?' At the same time he scolded the anglophile courtiers in public: 'Your complaint is,' he cried, 'that the Emperor of the French has too much power. But what use does he make of it? Is there another Sovereign as great as he? No. Can you point to a more liberal statesman? No. Was there ever a greater captain? No. You are rascals, more swayed by your passions than guided by concern for the public weal.' He instructed his agents to be saying everywhere that the only war he either ever had thought of or was still thinking of was war against Portugal. Lastly, he wrote to Napoleon assuring him of his 'absolute devotion – the most perfect model of a hero that History has to show.'

The Emperor who, if he had annihilated Prussia, was still far from done with Russia and was for the time being not at all anxious to have fresh embarrassments on his hands, pretended to be satisfied: 'Where on earth did you find,' he wrote on 16th November to Cambacérès, 'that Spain had joined the Coalition? We are on the best of terms with Spain.' All the same, after his triumphal entry into Berlin, he summoned General Pardo de Figueroa, the Spanish Ambassador to Prussia, and gave him, though in friendly dress, a serious warning: 'I want to tell you something which I want you to transmit in writing: in the sincere friendship of Charles IV for myself there is, as it were, a worm at work. An undefined fear and a certain distrust govern the heart of Spain in regard to my policies. If France went down in this struggle, Spain would go down too, and her fortunes would

not be improved by it. If Spaniards are relishing in their homes the sweets of peace, it is because France is their bulwark. Let that be clearly understood and let there be gratitude to me. If I thought of dethroning Charles IV, what would my other allies say about me? Besides, if in this matter I wounded the deepest feelings of your people, whose national pride I know, should I not, in seeking to subdue you, involve myself in an enterprise which would force me to divert my attention from the Northern powers? I have, I think, my dear Ambassador, spoken frankly.' And the Emperor added: 'Write also to your friend, the Prince of the Peace. His position is such, if he can hold it, that History will acclaim him for having guarded his country from the revolutions and wars which have everywhere desolated the nations – Let him be grateful for it, and let him take a piece of advice from me: if he wishes to live in safety, let him build no bridges with his enemies. His fall is certain if his policy shifts.'

Godoy dutifully heard, bowed his head, and, in token of contrition, made haste to fulfil the demands of the Imperial government.

These were many in number: recognition of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Naples, immediate payment of the sums still due to France under the 'subventions' Treaty, closure of Spanish ports to Russian ships, accession of Spain to the continental blockade of Great Britain, despatch to Hanover, under the command of the Marquess de la Romana, of a corps of ten thousand Spaniards who would thereafter form part of the Grand Army. The Prince of the Peace agreed to everything; as reward for his docility, he trusted to obtain, along with the final oblivion of his proclamation of 5th October, the revival of the great Portuguese project.

Meanwhile, his constant preoccupation with his own security and his unfailing vanity had caused him to have himself named 'Commandant Inspector' of the King's military Household and, soon after, on 13th January 1807, 'Admiral-General of Spain and the Indies'. The first office gave him immediate control of the troops of the Guard, the second, which had not been filled since 1748, conferred on him, along with the style of Most Serene

Highness and an additional income of three and a half million reals, the jurisdiction over all Spanish ships, civil and military. The existence of an admiral with an openly avowed dislike of the sea did not fail to raise a smile at Court, but the celebrations given in honour of his elevation were, for all that, of an exceptional éclat: military concerts, public and private illuminations, free entertainments. And the favourite wrote to Talleyrand: 'The occasion gives me the opportunity of laying at your feet the office with which the King, my master, has just honoured me.'

As a further perquisite, Manuel now had at his disposal at Madrid, for giving parties and receiving women, not only the palace of Buena Vista presented to him by the municipality, but the magnificent Admiralty quarters.

The gallant in him made him wish that Pepita Tudo should not be forgotten and he got Charles IV to assign to her the titles of Countess of Castillo Fiel and Viscountess of Rocafuerta, with special remainder to two bastards whom her lover had borne her.

Meanwhile Napoleon, having with difficulty beaten the Russians at Eylau and Friedland, had come to terms with them. Tilsit: the name recalls how the Corsican's charm affected the Tsar of Russia and how they agreed to divide Europe between them. What did they say about Spain? There are varying accounts. What is certain is that it was agreed to confront Portugal with an order to declare war on Great Britain. The decision marks the decline of the influence of Talleyrand, who had always been for handling Portugal gently. Soon he would have to leave the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and be succeeded there by Champagny.

Godoy should have been happy: his great scheme for the dismemberment of Portugal was taking shape; the Emperor had given it his blessing in principle and had decided to start on its execution. As fear of England made it hardly possible for Portugal to accept the ultimatum, war was almost inevitable, and then, the war once ended, would come the much sought 'sovereign state'.

There was, unhappily, bitter in the sweet: now that the Tsar had disinterested himself in Italy, Napoleon demanded that the

Queen of Etruria, Charles IV's favourite daughter, should go. He also insisted that, in the campaign about to open, the leading role should be taken by French troops and Spanish troops be used only in secondary operations.

Events followed on each other's heels: on 28th July 1807, the ultimatum was delivered to the Portuguese Minister at Paris; on the same day, the Emperor, now returned to Saint Cloud, sent out from there orders for the formation of an expeditionary force of twenty thousand men at Bayonne; on 31st August, Junot took over the command; on 1st October, the representatives of France and Spain in Portugal quitted Lisbon; on the 18th, Junot's leading battalions, courteously acclaimed by the Spanish authorities, crossed the frontier; on the 22nd, war was formally declared on Portugal; on the 27th, a treaty between France and Spain was signed at Fontainebleau laying down the conditions of their collaboration.

The Napoleonic Empire was now at its zenith. Throughout the continent of Europe west of the Niemen, no other great power was left; only France. In the east, it is true, the Russian colossus still stood; its Tsar, however, first beaten in the field and then seduced on a raft, had just abandoned the west to Napoleon and seemed content with dreams of Byzantium in exchange.

Napoleon had by now forgotten his beginnings; no longer was he the soldier of the Revolution, the 'petit caporal' of Arcola and Rivoli, hardly the 'petit tondu' of Austerlitz. Threatened with fleshiness beneath his Roman mask, but still active, still omnipresent, never out of touch, he had become an oecumenical autocrat, the King of kings, the disposer of sceptres, the 'fountain of favours'. In his desire to build, he broke. All about him was a growing entanglement of hierarchies, a suffocating etiquette. The youthful gaiety of the days that followed Brumaire, the military homeliness of Malmaison, were now but a memory. The Master judged even the Tuileries to be too Parisian, too near to the people's heart: so it was at Fontainebleau that he delighted to keep state and strove to outdo the ostentation of Versailles; there it was that – though by a refinement of pride never losing his personal simplicity – carriages, uniforms and liveries of an in-

comparable splendour crowded at his command: yet there always seemed something a little new about it.

There it was too that, by sending the Grand Army to fight on the rugged soil of Spain, he gave, though none saw it, the first blow to the magnificent edifice which his little white hands had built and the blood of Frenchmen had cemented.

The essential purpose of the Treaty of Fontainebleau – which was a secret treaty, unknown until the last moment even to the Spanish Ambassador at Paris – was the partition of the Portuguese State which it was proposed to conquer in concert.

Izquierdo, who had conducted the negotiations for Spain, had put forward again his old proposals, on which Duroc, for France, had imposed certain amendments. The final decision was that Northern Portugal should, under the name of Northern Lusitania, be given to the Queen of Etruria and her son as compensation for the surrender to Napoleon of their Italian kingdom; Southern Portugal, meaning Alemtejo and Algarve, was to be formed into an hereditary principality for Manuel Godoy; who was to have the central part, between the Tagus and the Douro, would be decided at a later date; the Portuguese colonies would be shared between France and Spain; Charles IV would take the title of Emperor of the Two Americas, thus saying good-bye to 'the Indies' of his old title. Duroc had, in the name of his master, demanded the cession of Passajes, but, at the last moment, abandoned this requirement. It was further agreed in an annex that the occupation of northern and southern Portugal should be effected by Spanish troops, and that the French expeditionary force, numbering twenty-eight thousand men, should take over the centre and, more especially, Lisbon. The French troops would be maintained by Spain and paid by France; the corps to occupy Lisbon was to be Junot's; an army in reserve, comprising forty thousand men, would be formed at Bayonne, ready to enter Spain in the event of the English sending help to Portugal.

Godoy seemed near success at last. This 'sovereign state', so long the dearest object of his heart, had now been officially promised him; he could see it, it was within his grasp. 'Sire', he wrote in his bad French to the Emperor, 'expressions of gratitude

wear a pleasing air, but do not always express the strength of the feelings of him who has expressed them. A sword and a brave heart directing it in your Imperial and Royal Majesty's service will ever be the worthiest tribute of gratitude open to those whom Your Majesty deigns to honour; your sincerest and most respectful admirer among them is myself.'

Alas! The Prince of the Peace's happiness was destined never to be without alloy. Why, just when he was reaching his goal, should he be quite unable to banish from his thoughts those too numerous French troops entering his country? Why, too, had he to feel a rising hatred directed at him, in the nation, in his own entourage and even in the shadow of the throne itself?

## CHAPTER X

### *The storm rises*

AS SEEN from France, in this autumn of 1807, what a tempting morsel Spain looked! The various French couriers and envoys who rode their horses to death in hurried journeys from Paris to Madrid and back in a matter of fifteen to eighteen days, all painted the country in the same colours.

What they saw was a common people of low tastes, whose chief concerns were processions, bull-fights and love in its more brutal forms, a discontented bourgeoisie suffering from the general impoverishment, a few finer intelligences who had taken all their ideas from the Encyclopaedia and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, an ignorant clergy, a lesser nobility dying of hunger on a soil that was half uncultivated, *grandeos* given over to timorous intriguing, a bleak, routine-ridden Court, a King who was almost an imbecile, a Queen in love with lust, an heir to the throne who was pusillanimous and unobtrusive, a detested favourite; this, in short, was a decrepit State which it would be as easy as it was necessary to equip with a new frame. On that point all were unanimous; Talleyrand, now half returned to favour and, with memories of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, still going in fear of the Bourbons, contrived, himself remaining in the background, that these reports should sound their most plausible in the Master's ear.

Napoleon, though he had still to decide, was tempted: the Spanish alliance had, after all, proved a broken reed; Godoy, on whom everything in Spain turned, was a crook; in 1801 he brought the campaign in Portugal to a premature end before it had yielded results useful to France; in the years that followed he had failed to maintain the regular flow of the promised subventions; in 1806, he had been found weaving intrigues with Russia and preparing to stab the Imperial armies in the back if they had been defeated in Germany. There would, of course, be no diffi-

culty in getting rid of this Godoy, but what then? Charles IV would still be on the throne and, though a cypher, was a Bourbon. Of his son little was known but the fact that he was on bad terms with the Prince of the Peace, but he again was a Bourbon. Now, was there really room in Europe for both the House of the Bonapartes and the House of the Bourbons? The Emperor was disposed to think not and permitted himself to confide his thoughts to Metternich: 'The Spanish Royal House are my personal enemies; they and I cannot be on thrones at the same time.'

But Napoleon, impetuous though he seemed at times, never reached decisions frivolously. Always meticulous and precise, he was for ever setting fresh enquiries afoot and asking new questions.

In the weeks that had just passed and even while preparations for the invasion of his country were in progress, Manuel Godoy had continued to play the sultan in his palace of the Admiralty. There, in the salons and galleries, a crowd of women pressed about him, completely submerging grandes of Spain, prelates, men of letters and military chiefs – women in the highest society, women of easy virtue, even nuns; the Prince of the Peace viewed this lowing herd with a bleak indifference and threw them from time to time a handkerchief: it was at once picked up. But, if it may so be put, his heart was no longer in the game. He turned quite sentimental and wrote to Izquierdo: 'I want to put an end to my career and have need of peace in the world at large to do it. Oh that I could make my name sound welcome to all and win in return a tear from posterity!'

True enough, he still had his little court of salaried incense-burners; true enough, though lately the King had treated him with some coldness, the Queen was still his passionately devoted friend; true enough, he still retained some friendships brought him by his flirtations with liberalism and his taste for the arts: the epicurean Moratin, Molière's elegant imitator, was still loyal to him, and Goya too, who, though the death of Maria Pilar of Alba had ravaged his heart and face alike, was still agreeable to painting the favourite as the protector of the lay establishment sacred to the application of the pedagogic methods of Pestalozzi, the Switzer. This tenuous screen, however, could not conceal



*Anderson, Rome*

GODOY AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
by Goya, in the *Academy S. Fernando, Madrid*



THE DUCHESS OF ALBA  
(Died 1802)

by Goya, and reproduced by courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America

from Manuel the looks of hatred which his passing brought.

By his spies, he knew what was being whispered in the houses of the great lords, such as the Dukes of Infantado and San Carlos, in the literary salons like that presided over by Quintana the poet, in the cloisters where the monks crossed themselves at thought or mention of him and also in the taverns where the muleteers congregated to drink: that his debaucheries no longer knew limits, that he kept the Queen in lovers, that he maintained permanently in his house a veritable harem, that, not content with imposing on his lawful wife, in whom was Bourbon blood, Pepita Tudo the favourite as a fixture, he now dispensed as well conspicuous favours to Pepita's younger sister; that his hoarded wealth was immense, that no financial transaction could be put through without something sticking to his fingers, that the yields of the taxes which afflicted the people were drained away to his money-bags, that in the Tudo's house he had gold bars hidden to a weight of eighteen hundred kilograms, that in the garden of his own palace he had buried six chests of gold pieces and as many again in the garden of the Queen, that he had tucked away in his mother's house thirty thousand Mexican piastres, that he had placed in security with banks at Genoa, Paris and London more than a milliard and a half reals, that other resources of his lay at Ferrol ready to be sent overseas at the first warning of danger; that, not content with having had the Princess of the Asturias poisoned, he was now thinking of ridding himself of the Prince and perhaps of the King himself so as to marry the Queen and assume the Crown – All that and a heap of other things! In these conversations conducted in an undertone for fear of the police, the flamboyant Spanish imagination was given free rein, and falsehood and truth were lovingly intermingled. Convinced by their own chatter, the speakers came away wounded in their religious beliefs, in their loyalty to the Crown, in their patriotism. The Castilian language is rich in insulting expressions of a violent and obscene kind, and several of them were spoken loud enough, for all the danger, to reach the ears of the well-hated favourite – the 'sausage-seller' wanting to make himself king.

All this Manuel knew and it made him ask himself whether

the principality at long last promised him by Napoleon would prove sufficient protection. The treaty embodying this promise had at first to remain secret. When would it be ratified and published? Was there a possibility of the Emperor going back on his engagement? Such things had happened before. Then too, there were these French battalions crossing the Pyrenean frontier; Portugal was their destination but only five or six days' marches separated them from Madrid. And, to conclude, still the same agonising thought: if the King, whose health seemed more and more precarious died suddenly, what would not have to be feared from the Prince of the Asturias, Ferdinand the obstinate and crooked?

At this moment an act of imprudence on that Prince's part gave Godoy the chance – and that without a suspicion of pre-meditation on his part being possible – of reducing him to impotence.

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It had been a constant grievance of the Queen against the Princess of the Asturias that she fanned the antipathy between the Prince and Godoy: her death did not, however, affect this mutual feeling in the slightest. Even so, Godoy endeavoured to build a bridge between Ferdinand and himself; his wife, Maria Teresa of Bourbon, had a sister; why not get Ferdinand to make her his second wife? When first sounded, the heir to the throne kept silence; later, when he was pressed, he exploded and exclaimed with a violence unusual in him: 'Let me rather stay widower all my life, or turn myself into a monk, than be brother-in-law of Manuel Godoy!'

It was on hearing this that the favourite, feeling that his foe was past reconciling, had determined to get himself made 'Commandant-Inspector' of the military Household of the King and by that means to secure control of what went on inside the Palace. No sooner installed than he made a clean sweep: the first Gentleman of the Chamber of the Prince of the Asturias, his old tutor, and several lesser servants of his were exiled or even imprisoned, and had their places taken by reliable successors; Manuel's own brother, Don Diego, lately created Duke of Almodo-

var del Campo, was promoted Colonel of the Walloon guard, and his intimate friend, the Duke of Parque, was put in command of the bodyguards.

Very naturally, the friends of the heir to the throne took fright. They consisted of several gentlemen and priests who lived on familiar terms with him. But their number was swelled by some weightier adherents – jurists, churchmen and officers – all of them vexed to see the traditions of the monarchy go to the devil and feeling themselves in sympathy with popular sentiment. In the salons of the Madrid palaces, in the corridors of the Escorial, down the garden-paths of Aranjuez, it was nothing but secret conversations and mysterious conclaves. The conclusion reached was unanimous: nothing could be done unless the Emperor of the French, and to start with his Ambassador, was won over to the side of Ferdinand.

Napoleon's Ambassador was at that time the Marquess François de Beauharnais.

Ever since the renewal of diplomatic relations in 1795, France had been represented at Madrid by a succession of decidedly picturesque personages: several successful but intransigent and rather braggart soldiers, like Pérignon and Beurnonville, a Jacobin Admiral, like Truguet, one or two repentant regicides with a long training in intrigue, like Guillemardet and Alquier, and a restless, intelligent, greedy climber, like Lucien Bonaparte. Beauharnais had nothing in his favour but being the brother-in-law of the Empress Josephine. A Colonel under the *ancien régime*, a deputy to the Constituent, a Major-General in Condé's army, he had distinguished himself nowhere. On his return from exile, the patronage of his sister-in-law had, in 1805, got him the post of Minister to Etruria; that of Ambassador to Spain followed towards the end of 1806. He was then about fifty years old; he had the air of being, not exactly stupid, but frivolous, vain and rather credulous. He suffered from the illusion that he was deeply versed in politics. The Emperor was later to call him 'a backstairs intriguer. I think he is a fool.'

He disliked Godoy from the first: 'He falls far below the idea that I had of him,' he wrote at the time of his first audience; 'he

is the sort of man to use firmness with rather than reason or persuasion. I doubt his having much moral courage; his talents are very ordinary and in the matter of candour he is not above suspicion.'

The Prince of the Peace could, by a little judicious flattery, have easily reversed the Ambassador's first unfavourable impression, but he was at that time entirely occupied with the *pourparlers* being conducted at Paris by Izquierdo and he did not exert himself with Beauharnais. There was even a rather painful clash between the two men when, Godoy having received from the King the style of Most Serene Highness, Beauharnais made a point of leaving it out in official correspondence. This caused the Queen, who always took her Manuel's side, to write the Ambassador down 'a fool and a knave'.

The consequence was that the Ambassador formed ties with the Ferdinandist coterie: the Dukes of Infantado and Don Carlos, the Marquess of Ayerbe, the Count of Orgaz, Don Juan Manuel de Villena and others too. At Aranjuez, one day in June, at the time of the siesta, Villena, in the greatest secrecy, presented to Beauharnais Canon Esquoïquiz, Archdeacon of Toledo, the Prince of the Asturias's former tutor who was still his active confidant.

Other interviews followed. Esquoïquiz was a man of finesse and convinced Beauharnais of Ferdinand's admiration for Napoleon and of his lively desire to become the great man's protégé. The talks turned to a possible marriage. Could not the Prince of the Asturias take as his second bride some young female relation of the Emperor's? At this the Ambassador was all attention and, after reflection, put forward the name of Marie Stéphanie Tascher de la Pagerie.

In actual fact this girl of nineteen was not related directly to the Emperor. She was, however, a cousin of the Empress's and, therefore, of the Ambassador's, who was naturally disposed to the view that he had nobody better on offer.

These *pourparlers* had all been conducted not only behind Charles IV's back – that was to be expected – but also behind Napoleon's. In the end, however, the latter had wind of them

and wrote to Champagny: 'Inform M. de Beauharnais that I take a very poor view of his activities and that intrigues of this kind are unworthy of my Ambassadors.' Then, he had second thoughts – Ferdinand might, after all, prove a useful pawn in the game which he was playing in Spain – and he told Beauharnais to convey to the Prince of the Asturias that the French government expected him to put in writing his request for a French Princess in marriage.

Now properly cornered, the Prince submitted and, on 11th October 1807, signed a letter the draft of which had been put together by Escoiquiz in conjunction with Beauharnais: 'Sire', ran this verbose missive, 'the fear of incommoding Your Imperial and Royal Majesty in the midst of the greater and more glorious matters which crowd unceasingly upon Him has hitherto prevented me from satisfying directly the liveliest of my desires, that, namely, of expressing, in writing at any rate, the feelings of respect, esteem and devotion which I have formed for a hero who excels all those of former times and has been sent by Providence to save Europe from the total upheaval which lately threatened it. Filled as I am with respect and filial affection for him who has given me life and is endowed with the most upright and most generous heart, I shall never venture to tell what is already better known to Your Imperial Majesty than to me, that these very qualities, so estimable in themselves, are but too often instruments in the hands of false and wicked people to conceal the truth from the eyes of Sovereigns, however gratifying that truth may be to characters like that of my worthy father. If men of that kind, who are, unhappily, to be found here, allowed my father to have a true knowledge of the character of Your Imperial Majesty even as I know it, what would not his ardour be to strengthen the bonds which should unite our two Houses! And what properer means of attaining that object can there be than that of requesting Your Imperial Majesty to grant me the honour of an alliance with a Princess of His august Family? Therefore I beg, with the greatest confidence, the paternal protection of Your Imperial Majesty, in order that, not only may He deign to grant me the honour of an alliance with his Family,

but also that He may smooth out every difficulty, and clear away every obstacle to this object of my desires.'

Put more shortly, what was asked was that, as a correlative to the suggested marriage, Charles IV should be forced to dismiss Godoy. Beyond all question the Prince of the Asturias committed a grave impropriety in making overtures of this kind to a foreign Sovereign, without his father knowing. And Napoleon's conduct had been certainly no less improper in asking for a letter direct from the Prince. As has already been seen in the matter of Godoy's principality, the Emperor had a weakness for getting people to compromise themselves in writing.



The Court, following its usual routine, had left the castle of San Ildefonso on 22nd September and taken up residence at the Escorial; there Ferdinand and his friends anxiously awaited Napoleon's answer.

Everyone knows the lay-out of this tremendous monastery-palace; in memory of the martyrdom of Saint Laurence, it has the shape of a grill and is divided up into three parts; the North Wing is occupied by the palace, the South wing by the monastery, while between the two are the basilica and the main quadrangle; the whole is linked together by long galleries. At his own request, the Prince of the Asturias was housed in the monastery part, in what was the prior's old apartment, whence are distant views over the harsh landscape. He preferred the more discreet society of the monks to being near his parents.

It was now the middle of October, when the days were growing short, the withered leaves had started to fall and the North wind blowing off the *sierra* had taken on a sharper tang. The cold could already be felt in the corridors of stone, even though the *braseros* had been lighted; around them the halbadiers on duty gathered to keep warm. Melancholy thoughts filled the heir to the throne as he sat enclosed in his chamber, making copies of the notes sent to him by Esquíoiz. Though he was now twenty-three years of age, he still cut the figure of a very small boy in the presence of his termagant of a mother: if she should come to

learn of her son's daring approach before Napoleon had signified his pleasure, her rage would know no limits! Egged on by that accursed Godoy of hers, she would be equal to anything, even violence.

Ferdinand grew uneasy: all about the palace were suspicious comings and goings. The Prince of the Peace had just left the Escorial on the pretext that he wanted to shake off a cold, and had returned to Madrid; what was the game behind this unusual departure? Every hour almost, couriers arrived from the capital and were admitted to the Queen's presence; what were the messages brought? And why did Maria Luisa, by an act of thoughtfulness quite unusual with her, have doors put up – doors fitted with bolts – between the part of the monastery her son lived in and the chambers of the chapter? In spite of the growing cold, the stormclouds lowered upon the massive pile of granite whence Philip II had governed half the world.

On 27th October – the very day on which, all amid the smiling splendours of Fontainebleau, Izquierdo signed the fatal treaty – the thunderbolt fell.

At seven o'clock in the evening Ferdinand went as usual to pay his respects to his parents. He found them stern and agitated; Charles IV told him, in a voice choking with emotion, that he knew all about his intrigues and ordered him off to his room with instructions not to leave it until further orders. Ferdinand's anguish redoubled when he saw some bodyguards arrive bearing papers which he recognised; the papers were those which he kept hidden in his bureau; they had just been seized.

Returned to his room, he could not sleep. Maria Luisa, meanwhile, feverishly examined the confiscated documents and had an inventory made of them. With eyes burning with anger, she sent off courier upon courier to Godoy. Leaning on the bosom of the woman, whoever she was, who was spending the night with him, the favourite glanced at the messages and smiled. The 28th was a day of agitation. On the 29th, Charles IV sent to Napoleon a letter drafted by Godoy which was in substance a furious indictment of the Prince of the Asturias: 'My eldest son,' he wrote, 'the heir presumptive to the Crown, has spun an appalling

conspiracy to drive me from the throne; he has even gone to the length of contemplating an attempt on his mother's life. A design of so horrible a character must receive exemplary punishment. The Prince's right to succeed must be revoked; one of his brothers will be worthier to take his place in my heart and throne.' In the words 'one of his brothers' the hand of Manuel is visible. Certainly Don Carlos, the second son, is not intended; perhaps it is Francisco de Paula, probably fruit of the loves of Maria Luisa and the favourite.

What time the courier bearing the royal dispatch was galloping for France, Ferdinand was brought before his parents. The King, with a ferocious air, summoned him to explain the contents of the confiscated documents. The Prince at first pretended that these were only old papers composed by his wife before her death. The King shook his fist at him, saying: 'Ferdinand, that is a lie; you will pay me for it, yes, you will pay me for it.' Thereat the unhappy youth collapsed, stammering half-formed sentences but still persisting in denial. His mother's aspect was that of a fury.

Shortly after eleven o'clock on the night of 29th October, the Hieronymite monks who were chanting in the choir of the basilica saw file past a singular procession: in front walked the King, sombre and nervous, followed by the Prince, cast-down and haggard; then came four Ministers, and behind them twelve bodyguards bearing torches; a small group of masons and locksmiths, carrying the tools of their trades, brought up the rear. The steps resounded on the flags, their echo rumbling round the vaults of stone; upon the walls, fantastic shadows flickered beneath the torches' trembling beams.

The cortège came to the monastery, where Charles IV roughly pushed his son into a cell furnished with nothing but a narrow bed. Then, in a harsh voice, he informed him that this melancholy lodging was to be his prison and that he would be unable to hold communication with anyone, other than two valets of the Queen. The King, the Ministers and the guards then withdrew. Ferdinand could hear the rattle of arms of the sentinels who had been posted, followed by the noise of bars being cemented in, bolts

being put on and doors being walled up. Then silence fell; the Prince was alone with his anguish.

What were, then, these papers which were found in his room and touched off such an explosion? An inventory had been made of them and, in her room at the Escorial, the Queen read and re-read it with a growing fury. In his palace at Madrid, Godoy found new grounds for satisfaction as he perused a copy. At first view, however, there seemed no great reason for taking these documents very tragically. There was a long memorandum to the King denouncing, with biblical quotations in support, the misdeeds and infamies of the Prince of the Peace and calling for his dismissal; there was a note in which Ferdinand set out his reasons for having refused to marry the favourite's sister-in-law; there was a letter of Escoiquiz's to the Prince of 28th May, in which he suggested to him the idea of a marriage with a relation of Napoleon; there was a secret cypher; lastly, there was a draft decree, intended for publication in the event of Charles IV's death, appointing the Duke of Infantado to be Captain-General of New Castile. What was there in all this for so much fuss?

In his *Memoirs*, Godoy was later to claim that, in addition to those mentioned, a much more compromising blueprint had been discovered: nothing less than a plan for kidnapping the Queen. This alleged plan seems certainly to have been an *ex post facto* invention. What at the time caused Manuel so much delight and Maria Luisa so much anger was that the papers in their hands, though not of great moment, confirmed the existence of an intrigue, with the heir to the throne at the centre of it, which, via the French Ambassador, reached right back to Napoleon.

Notwithstanding the precautions taken for secrecy, the favourite's police had succeeded in getting wind of the conversations between Beauharnais and Escoiquiz. Godoy's interest lay in puffing out this affair. An anonymous letter, possibly his own composition, opportunely arrived to arouse the suspicions of Charles IV and Maria Luisa: there was no doubt that Ferdinand had fomented a conspiracy and sought the help of the Emperor of the French. Godoy had never found it difficult to pass off a piece of silly clumsiness as treason in the eyes of his Sovereigns

and a few imprecise vapourings as a criminal conspiracy. But formerly he had lacked proofs in writing: these proofs were, to outward appearance at any rate, thenceforward his in the shape of the documents seized at the Escorial. The King and Queen were now irremediably ranged against their son, whom, in his mind's eye, the Prince of the Peace already saw disinherited and, perhaps, executed (the word had passed Maria Luisa's lips) – saw too Francisco de Paula, the son of his flesh, proclaimed heir to the throne, himself as regent and *de facto* King.

Don José Caballero, Minister of Pardons and Justice and a meticulous lawyer, was dispatched to the Escorial, where he visited Ferdinand in his cell and subjected him to a rigorous interrogatory. His isolation and the emotions of the last few days had proved too much for what little strength of mind the unfortunate Prince naturally possessed; trembling and almost crying, he confessed his intrigue, adding that he had been pushed into it by Escoiquiz and the Duke of Infantado. Orders were at once given to secure the persons of these last. At the same time Charles IV signed a manifesto the idea of which had been put into his head by Godoy. A surprising document it was in which the King called his subjects as witnesses of the perfidy which had caused an unnatural son to plot his dethronement. It failed, however, completely of its purpose: the Spaniards, on reading it, understood very well that the person to be dethroned was not the King but the favourite, and they felt themselves transported with love for a Prince who had tried to bring about the fall of that well-hated person. First at Madrid, and later in the provinces, enthusiasm grew with every passing hour.

Godoy realised that he had dawdled long enough and that he must now take the affair in hand himself on the spot. On the night of 31st October–1st November, he wrenched himself free from his mistress's arms, left his palace in secret and was soon at the Escorial. Under his impulsion, steps followed one another in rapid succession: the troops in the capital were confined to barracks and new arrests were made, so that by now most of Ferdinand's friends were under lock and key and several of them, in panic, were already loosening their tongues; the Prince himself

was subjected to further interrogatories which left him in the last stages of exhaustion and extracted from him a further batch of denunciations; the King wrote a second letter to Napoleon in which he complained of the subversive activities of Beauharnais; lastly, the favourite paid a visit to his victim who, completely demoralised and with his mind's eye already seeing himself beheaded, implored Godoy to save him. To that Manuel replied, with princely affability, that his purpose in coming to the Escurial – notwithstanding, so he said, a raging fever – was precisely that.

There was a reason for this change of heart, for now it seemed to him that the fall of the heir to the throne would prove a somewhat dubious adventure for himself. What would the Spanish people, already in a state of commotion, say to it? What would be thought by the Army, who loved Ferdinand? Above all, what would Napoleon's reaction be in a matter in which his Ambassador was so involved? Everything weighed, it would be better not to push things to their conclusion. Ferdinand must, he thought, have lost all prestige; had he not prostrated himself just now before him after a cowardly denunciation of his accomplices? Henceforward, perhaps, it might be possible to convert him into a docile instrument. And then, if things turned out badly, there was always that Portuguese principality, now irrevocably promised.

In short, Godoy talked to Charles IV, and the latter, whose anger had subsided and who had in any case no clear idea of what was happening, accepted with delight the idea of a pardon, which would enable him to enjoy his hunting all the more. On 4th November, Ferdinand addressed to his mother a humble petition: 'I have failed in my duty to my father and my King,' he wrote, 'but I repent of it. I have denounced the guilty. I bitterly regret the great sin which I have committed; thus with the deepest submission I ask you to forgive it, as well as my obstinacy in concealing the truth from you the other evening. That is why I beg Your Majesty from the bottom of my heart to deign to interpose her mediation between my father and myself, that he may graciously allow a grateful son to go and kiss the feet of His

Majesty.' On the 5th, a royal decree was published exonerating the Prince of the Asturias.

Manuel had seen to it that this decree should be drafted in terms which humiliated Ferdinand: in it his admissions were reproduced at length, his denunciations all set out, his degradation advertised – and only after all that was the conclusion reached: 'The voice of nature disarms the avenger and, when inadvertence calls for pity, a tender father cannot harden his heart.'

After that, thought Godoy, Ferdinand had ceased to count in Spain. He was grievously mistaken.



Meanwhile, the trial of the 'accomplices' of the Prince of the Asturias was not abandoned. Indeed, the favourite planned to push on with it energetically, as a good way of ridding himself of avowed enemies. The accused – namely, Canon Escoïquiz, the Duke of Infantado, the Marquess of Ayerbe, the Count of Orgaz and four others of Ferdinand's intimates – were transferred to the Escorial and put behind bars the solidity of which was furtively tested by the Queen herself, appearing in disguise. An extraordinary Junta of Justice was set up, composed of eleven members and presided over by Don Arias Mon, Governor of the Council of Castile; the Crown was represented by Simon de Viegas, a creature of Godoy's.

The proceedings were, as appeared from the first, hampered by a most unfortunate lacuna. For they revolved, as to their essence, about the intrigue carried on by Escoïquiz and Beauharnais, and the Emperor of the French forbade the mention of his Ambassador's name in the course of them.

Upon receipt of Charles IV's letter to him of 3rd November, Napoleon had created a violent scene with the Spanish Ambassador, which he interspersed with oaths: 'Send me at once,' he cried, 'a courier to proceed to your Court and there declare that never has the Prince of the Asturias written to me and that my Ambassador has embarked on no sort of intrigue. Tell them that, as from now, I take the Prince under my protection and that, if

violence, however slight, is used against him, or if any insult is offered to my Ambassador, or if the army now mustered does not set off immediately for Portugal as arranged between us, I will declare war on Spain.'

The anger was put on, the statements were contrary to the evidence. But the Emperor was not minded to expose his majestic self to splashes of the mud stirred up by his representative's manoeuvres in a Court as degraded as the Spanish. Was he not the supreme judge and master? Action of his must seem always like the lightning-flash, bearer of light; it was a crime to reveal the deliberations that lay behind.

Godoy obeyed his orders and the judges were formally forbidden to permit any allusion to the French Ambassador – still less, of course, to Napoleon – at any stage in the proceedings.

From that moment the only serious count in the accusation collapsed. To no purpose did Viegas, the public prosecutor, draw up a formal indictment – a document found singularly jejune, and positively laughable as to one phrase in which it was said that Maria Luisa 'devoted herself every night and day to the good of her subjects.' That did not prevent the penalty of death being demanded against Escoiquiz, Infantado and Ayerbe, and that of imprisonment against the others.

The affair excited growing public agitation, and manifestations of anger, muffled at first and then scorning concealment, succeeded each other. The entire nobility of Spain had been summoned to a solemn *Te Deum* to offer thanks for the safety of the King: only four turned up, of whom two were French refugees. As the rumour spread that the Prince of the Asturias was going to be seized by the police and deported a long way off, armed peasants gathered in the hills and swore to oppose with force this act of violence. The populace of Madrid was in a state of effervescence. No one but was a strong partisan of the accused, whose cause came to be considered as that of the country itself, rising against the unworthy favourite who oppressed it.

Godoy, now thoroughly frightened, put pressure on the judges to deal roundly with the defendants. The judges refused, thereby increasing the agitation. In the end, on 23rd January 1808, the

Junta of Justice, meeting at the monastery of the Escorial in the cell of one of its members who was confined to his bed and almost at death's door, declared unanimously that, in the absence of evidence, there was really nothing before them to try, that the case was not one for punishment and that the accused should immediately be set at liberty. When Charles IV, then at Aranjuez, was informed of this, his simple and easy-going nature caused him at first to give vent to a lively satisfaction, but, not long after, yielding to the pressure of Maria Luisa and Godoy, he changed his tune and banished to their provinces those whom the Junta had acquitted. They were destined not to stay long in them.

The affair of the Escorial was the work of Godoy seeking to confound his enemies; it turned to his discomfort and their exaltation. The accused were not people of much real importance in themselves – crafty priests and dunderheaded gentry: now they cut a figure as national heroes. And the man at the centre of all this agitation, the Prince of the Asturias, had been made by his avowals, denunciations and appeals for mercy to seem a singularly feeble, fearful and even cowardly creature: that did not matter to him – he had been an object of Godoy's animosity and that was enough to give the Spanish people a passionate regard for him.

Well may we marvel at this people of Spain, so rooted in passion and faith, so deeply impregnated with monarchical fervour. So long as the favourite seemed one with the dynasty, the prestige of the latter covered him and hostility showed itself no further than in obscene songs and scandalous stories. But his hatred of the heir to the throne, of the man to whom the Cortes had already sworn fidelity, was now public knowledge: the charm was broken. The all-powerful Manuel was thenceforward nothing but a low adventurer, a 'sausage-seller', a flouter of laws divine and human, an enemy of the Crown as of the nation; and the duty of every loyal subject was to go for him.

And now, from Pyrenean ports, could be heard the echo of battalions on the march, of cannon and caissons rolling on: it came from the Imperial army entering Spain. Might not this be

the looked - for liberation? The great Napoleon, talked of in the salons and cabarets almost as a person of legend, would he not put down the proud with powerful hand and restore the reign of justice? He proclaimed himself to be the friend of Spain, her King and dynasty. Why not believe it of him? And what better proof could he give of this affection than in purging the realm of the intriguer who dishonoured it? It was with a fervent hope that the leading French troops were greeted as they made their way down towards the Ebro valley.

But the Spanish lion was now aroused, and when it realised that the hand it was hastening to lick aimed at putting it in chains its roar would be terrible indeed.

## CHAPTER XI

### *The Thunderbolt falls*

WHILE THE judges in the Escorial affair were deliberating, Godoy was growing uneasy. Not that he even suspected the extent of the movement against him which was rising from the nation's innermost and soundest part; but the information brought him by his police made him aware of the surface stirrings. One reason for fear gripped him especially: he was no longer the only channel of communication between Spain and Napoleon; without going through him the latter had made contact with the heir to the throne and declared himself his protector – a novelty this, holding much menace for the future. The immediate threat was to the treaty of Fontainebleau – the treaty promising him at last the Portuguese principality, wherein were comfort and asylum: would this inestimable treaty now be ratified?

Manuel left no stone unturned. A present here worth seventy thousand francs to Duroc, signatory of the treaty; Golden Fleeces there to Duroc again and Jérôme Bonaparte; whatever could be done the Prince of the Peace did to get himself support at Paris. At the same time – and this was a more significant step – he took up again the idea of marrying Ferdinand to a French princess and definitely threw to the wolves his master's daughter, the Queen of Etruria.

Even before the discovery of the intrigue being carried on by Beauharnais, the idea of joining in wedlock the Prince of the Asturias and Marie Stéphanie Tascher de la Pagerie had vanished into thin air. But, thought Godoy, 'if the Prince received through me the hand of a relative of the Emperor's, things would look differently. This future Queen of Spain would owe her position to me and would thus constitute a permanent link between me and Napoleon.' In agreement with Charles IV, he opened up the subject to Michel, the banker whose wife was found so agreeable

by Murat, and suggested a marriage between a niece of the latter's and Ferdinand. Murat was at that time somewhat disgruntled at having collected in the recent distribution of crowns nothing better than the Grand Duchy of Berg; Godoy's idea pleased him but Napoleon, unfortunately, frowned on it. The latter, whose Spanish policy had not yet taken a definite change, had in view another possibility: that of uniting the heir to the Spanish throne with Lolotte, the daughter of Lucien, with whom he sought a reconciliation. Lucien refused the reconciliation, offered as it was at the price of giving up his own wife; the most he would consent to was to send his daughter to Paris so that a husband might be found for her there; but by the time she got there Napoleon had other plans. 'I am never in a hurry', he wrote to Murat; 'the secret of success is not to be impatient.'

Meanwhile, he wasted no time; it was not in his nature to do so. The Treaty of Fontainebleau provided that the Queen-Regent of Etruria and her son should be dispossessed of their States and receive in exchange a kingdom still on paper in the North of Portugal. The Treaty had not yet been ratified when, on 23rd November 1807, the French Minister to Etruria had audience with the Queen and told her that she now had to move out. The Queen, 'upset but not surprised', sold her horses, distributed patents of decorations, loaded her furniture on to some sixty waggons, sent to join it the coffin containing the mortal remains of her husband, and, on 4th December, left Florence as the French troops moved in. So ended the Kingdom of Etruria, to the creation of which Spain had, not so long before, offered up Louisiana. Godoy was, naturally, informed of everything, but protested at nothing that was done; and Charles IV, after a scolding from him, made ready without a word of complaint to welcome back the dethroned Infanta.

Would submission on so abject a scale as this win, at last, its due reward? Would the Treaty of Fontainebleau be implemented? In a conquered Portugal, would Godoy find his principality and the ex-Queen of Etruria her new kingdom? The condition precedent was the effective conquest of Portugal.

That conquest was now well on the way, too well, perhaps, to

suit the favourite, for the Spanish troops were hardly participating and Junot's regiments were advancing without the Cabinet at Madrid having any very clear idea as to their movements. French reinforcements were entering Spain without an invitation; the corps of Dupont was settling in between Vitoria and Burgos. Decidedly, the expedition was changing its character.

Panic reigned at Lisbon. Move after move was made for stopping the invasion peacefully, but all in vain. The French marched on, and, having crossed the Spanish-Portuguese frontier, were soon in sight of the capital. On the night of 24th-25th November, the Regent of Portugal summoned a special meeting of the Council, which, after deliberating for several hours, decided that the Royal Family, the Ministers, the Court and the leading men of Portugal should, under the protection of the British squadron cruising at the mouth of the Tagus, embark on the eight ships of the line, four frigates and twenty-four smaller boats which had already been assembled and on which the treasure had been loaded; then, fleeing before the French eagles, they would trust their fortunes to the ocean, so long the friend of the Portuguese, and seek refuge in Brazil. On the 27th, amid scenes of general commotion, embarkation took place. On the 29th, in clear weather and with a north-East wind, the fleet sailed. On the 30th, Junot led into Lisbon his tired, hungry, barefoot but exultant battalions.

Of Charles IV's two daughters that had sat on thrones, one, the Queen of Etruria, had been driven from her State and was drifting along the roads in the middle of a disorderly convoy; the other, the Regent of Portugal's wife, was sailing the seas, an exile, towards a largely barbarous country: such were the bitter fruits of the Treaty of Fontainebleau.

Godoy still hoped against hope that there would be sweeter fruits for himself. The Spanish troops had, in conformity with the arrangements made, entered the south and north of Portugal. It looked as if nothing remained to do but proceed to the partition agreed on. The favourite sent off to Paris courier after courier to press Izquierdo to obtain the execution of the Imperial promises. One of these dispatches finished up with this bitter cry

in a postscript: 'Things look terrible.'

For several weeks Napoleon, who had gone to Italy to give her a sight of the master's eye, kept silent and for Godoy his silence was charged with menace. At last, on 1st January 1808, the Emperor returned to Paris and spoke. But what disillusioning words were his! 'I am of opinion,' he wrote to Charles IV, 'that matters are not as yet sufficiently advanced to publish our convention on the future of Portugal.' And on 1st February, Junot declared in a proclamation that the whole of Portugal would be administered provisionally by himself and that the country's public acts would be promulgated in the name of His Majesty the Emperor of the French.

The Portuguese principality, to be the shelter of Godoy's fortune and the refuge of his declining years, in hope of which he had sacrificed his dignity, his master's family and the interests of Spain, was now only a shattered dream. Fatter and redder than ever, the favourite, to whom the acquittal of the accused men of the Escorial had just dealt yet another blow, shuttled between the chamber of the Queen and Pepita Tudo's bedroom, breathing forth bitter complaints. To Izquierdo he wrote: 'The treaty which you made is dead. Spain is overrun with troops. What remained of our squadrons has been demanded from us. Everywhere are uncertainty, intrigues and fears. It is the very devil.'

Napoleon, meanwhile, was taking stock, having finished the work of getting information. Towards the end of 1807, he had sent to Madrid Tournon, one of his chamberlains, in whose judgement he had confidence. Tournon on his return confirmed the previous reports: the King was a nullity, the Queen was 'the Messalina of her age', the favourite had no supporters and the desire of the nation was for a French intervention which would place Ferdinand on the throne. Another emissary was sent out at the beginning of 1808, namely, Vandeul, who had been Chargé d'Affaires in Spain and knew the country well. His conclusion was the same: 'Spain is at a moment of crisis and expects the Emperor to settle her fate. She looks on him as her sole resource.' And Beauharnais, the Ambassador, whose conscience had been none too quiet since the Ferdinandist intrigue,

went even further: 'Only at the hands of His Imperial Majesty does Spain look for her salvation. A kind word from him would give hope and happiness to the entire Spanish people at a moment which I judge propitious for anything he may be pleased to command.'

The temptation was, beyond question, a strong one. To lay hands on Spain seemed an easy operation, and one which, by closing the coastline of the peninsula to contraband and bringing in fresh ships and sailors, would deal a terrible blow to England, the implacable enemy of the Imperial system. This way, perhaps, lay a victorious peace, and triumph. Behind Napoleon's imposing forehead the decision took shape but he chose as yet to let nothing of it appear. 'The doing of a thing must precede the avowal of an intention to do it,' he wrote soon after to his brother Lucien. The only steps he took were to reinforce Moncey's corps which had already followed Junot and Dupont into Spain, and to build up reserves in the rear, namely, a division at Poitiers and another at Orleans. To add to the anxiety of the Madrid cabinet, the Emperor let the rumour get around that he was going to visit the peninsula in person at the head of an army of fifty thousand men. Meanwhile, on 20th February and without a word of instruction to him on matters of a political character, he appointed Murat, the Grand Duke of Berg, his lieutenant in Spain.

Godoy was finally floored when he learned that, on 24th February, Duroc and Talleyrand had, in the name of the master, sent Izquierdo a note containing eighteen 'questions and observations', and that the latter had been requested to take the note to Aranjuez and deliver it into the hands of no one but the King, to the exclusion of the Prince of the Peace from the conversations. To a creature of the favourite this should have been a disagreeable mission; but, from having lived so long in the rays of the omnipotent Caesar, the ex-director of the Botanical Gardens at Madrid behaved with remarkable assurance, and it was noticed that he even took precedence over an almost obsequious Manuel. Poor Manuel! For nearly two years now Napoleon had kept ever green the memory of his treachery in 1806; his hour of vengeance had come.

That vengeance was a characteristically complete one; to drive Godoy out of public life not being enough for him, the Emperor sought to dishonour him as well and gave instructions for the drawing up of a pamphlet against him which was to be circulated all over Spain: 'My orders are,' he wrote to Champagny on 8th March, 'to stress the peculations of the Prince of the Peace and his enormous wealth, and to tell in detail of his criminal intrigues with the Queen, of his career first as favourite of the bed himself and then as one who slaked on others the disgusting appetites of this Princess. Come on next to his liaisons with the entire business world, to his venality and his corruption.' A Corsican vendetta this, with no holds barred!

It looked at that time as if the precise and methodical genius of Napoleon, which left nothing to chance, had conceived two alternative plans: according to one – the one set out in the note to Izquierdo of 24th February – France would rest content with annexing the part of Spain between the Pyrenees and the Ebro; Charles IV would be kept on the throne on condition of concluding an offensive and defensive alliance with France and opening the Spanish colonies to French trade; he would even receive – perhaps – the whole of Portugal in return, while Ferdinand would be married to a French Princess. According to the other plan, there would be an end of the Bourbon dynasty, and one of the Emperor's brothers would be invited to wear the crown of the Catholic kings and rule over a Spain to be thenceforward in vassalage to the French Empire.

It may be that the first of these two plans was only a blind, designed to keep the Spanish Court in play for a time and give the French troops time to occupy some key positions. Yet, even as late as the middle of March, Napoleon seemed to be serious about the negotiations; his tone grew milder; he even postponed the publication of the brochure directed at Godoy. Knowing that Izquierdo would be returning to Paris with counter-proposals, he told Duroc and Talleyrand to have further talks with him as soon as he arrived.

Concurrently, however – and this goes far to prove the element of bluff in his mildness – Napoleon had sounded his brother

Joseph, King of Naples, about the throne of Spain. Joseph was coy, but the Emperor was not the man to take 'no' for a final answer when it got in the way of his plans. He held in reserve the weapon, usable at need, of converting suggestion into order; meanwhile, and without having definitely come down off the fence, he ordered his army along the road to Madrid.

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Spanish feeling in regard to the French troops was now no longer quite what it had been when Junot's leading regiments crossed the Pyrenees. The soldiers had been told to behave themselves; but they were for the most part young conscripts with little training and poorish equipment, to whom inferior discipline made pillage natural. Quarrels and assaults on girls occurred from time to time. Then too, if private pillage was still rather the exception, authorised requisitioning already weighed heavily on the inhabitants of the occupied zones. The officers, who were ignorant of the language and customs of Spain and had trodden victoriously so many foreign soils, had a natural tendency to treat her as one more conquered country. Moreover, some of the instructions which they received seemed to encourage them in this. It was in execution of instructions of this sort that, on 16th February, General Darmagnac seized by a trick the citadel of Pampeluna, and that, on the 29th, General Duhesme, by the same method, gained possession of the citadel of Barcelona and the fort of Montjuich. Godoy dared make no protest when he learned of this twofold treachery, but public opinion, on the other hand, was stirred. Were the French going to prove, then, something other than allies and liberators?

Ever since 1793, there had subsisted in the nation – a few aristocratic and intellectual circles excepted – a ferment of distrust, and even of antipathy, for revolutionary and free-thinking France. Of recent times these feelings had been obscured by a yet livelier passion: hatred of the favourite. The great Napoleon would, it was firmly believed, rid Spain of this monster. As a pledge of his benevolence had he not promised the hand of one of his relations to the heir to the throne, Ferdinand the well-beloved? The people

of Spain had heard some talk of the Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagerie who was so vaunted by the French Ambassador. And now they learnt that the young woman was marrying someone else. The alarm and suspicion, which had for several months already gripped Godoy's heart, now gained the people's. As if to confirm their fears, arrived the news of the conflict between the Pope and the Emperor – a conflict which ended in the invasion of the States of the Church. This news gave deep offence, and the lower clergy and the monks fanned the flame that was all ready to leap up again. The French were still what they had always been – tricksters, blasphemers, devils! These exhortations bore their fruits: the patrols which scoured the streets of Barcelona of a morning found, even at that early date, the bodies of several soldiers stabbed in the back.

At the beginning of March, the chamberlain Tournon, who had been sent to Spain on another mission, gave out a different note from that of the previous December: 'Faces have darkened here since my first visit,' he wrote, 'and I have found a big change of opinion. Nothing that happens but helps to embitter minds against the French. The Spanish character is noble and generous, but with a tendency to ferocity; they will never endure to be treated as a conquered people. Rather than that, they will prove equal to the sternest resolves and will leave no excess, however frightful, untried.' The reports of the secret agents and the appreciations of the army commanders sounded the same note. Murat himself, though his was in general a mind sunk in the stupefied admiration of his own dazzling uniforms, curling locks and prancing chargers, wrote to the Emperor: 'Very little would suffice to set off a general rising throughout Navarre.'

Napoleon might put a bold front on it and write that 'everything is perfectly quiet' and that 'General Duhesme is an old woman': he began for all that to feel disquiet. His forces in Spain amounted to no more than fifty thousand men spread out over wide stretches of territory, and he felt in his bones the full measure of the danger of an insurrection breaking out in their rear. Precise order followed on the heels of precise order: pay must be paid regularly so that the marauder might be without

excuse, provisioning must be a matter of close attention, acts of indiscipline must receive condign punishment, sums advanced by the Spanish provinces must be scrupulously reimbursed, and, above all, great care must be taken not to offend the religious feelings of Spaniards and all steps must be taken to convince them of 'the esteem and friendship' of that Emperor 'who had so much at heart the welfare of their country.' Lastly, since it was the habit of the master, when things looked difficult, to have at the Court of Spain a man of intelligence who enjoyed his complete confidence, he decided to recall the vainglorious Beauharnais and put in his stead an experienced diplomat, La Forest.

At the very moment that, at Paris, Caesar was taking these precautions while still he hesitated on the Rubicon's bank, certain events happened at Aranjuez which had the effect of precipitating his decision – a decision that was to bring about his downfall.

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Aranjuez was an unhealthy sort of place, built in a meretricious style, which had held for a moment the affections of Philip II, and where Philip V had sought to conjure up something of the Versailles for which he hankered. The chateau, often restored and enlarged, has been, as it were, stretched on a rack and lacks all really fine proportions. There is something depressing about the elaborate gardens, with their circuses, green arbours and mazes: only the far-stretching avenues of elms and plane trees – havens of shade in summer – wear an air of grandeur. The gardens are dotted about with fountains and at their foot flow the swift waters of the Tagus. It is an oasis, at once voluptuous and melancholy, in the heart of the Castilian desert and lies about ten leagues away from Madrid.

The town itself, with its dead-straight streets and low houses, was, as is clear to see, no better than an indifferent annexe in which to lodge courtiers, officials and servants. Though today it has lost its glory, it was never very much alive except for the few weeks for which the Court took up its annual residence there between dates that had become almost a fixture.

Towards the end of 1807, however, by an unheard-of innova-

tion, Charles IV, shattered by the conspiracy of which his son was the centre-piece, varied a little his immemorial routine: on leaving the Escorial, he did not, as custom prescribed, make a stay at Madrid, but went straight to Aranjuez. Here was a portent, and majordomos grown grey in the royal etiquette and *camareras* pickled in tradition well understood that something was rotten in the State of Spain.

It was in this relaxing place of residence that the King, careworn and bewildered, that the Queen, wild with an anger that she could not show, that the Prince of the Asturias, surlier than ever, that Godoy, eaten up with anxiety, and that the agitated crowd of ministers, councillors and courtiers, watched the happenings which, during the early months of 1808, followed hard on each other's heels.

At the beginning of March, anxiety was at its peak: beyond all question, the French troops had taken the road to Madrid. Murat, who was leading them, disdained to answer the breathless messages sent him by the Prince of the Peace; Izquierdo had just arrived from Madrid, bringing with him the threatening memorandum that had been handed to him in the Emperor's name; sinister rumours ran about.

Godoy still tried to look as if nothing was the matter, but could not succeed in hiding his anxiety, even in public. He was no longer master of his nerves and a Gentleman of the Chamber, by name Galvez Canero, actually saw him slapping Maria Luisa's face in a gallery of the chateau when her husband was only a few paces in front. So many hopes in ruins, so many intrigues woven and unwoven, so many stacked up hatreds, had definitely got the better of his buoyant temperament and his natural jauntiness. He had been run to earth. To two monks who came to see him he confided: 'With all this bad news going about, I have reached the point of wanting to put on, not a habit like yours, but a sack, and to disappear into a corner.' He was like a bull loaded with *banderillas* and making for the place, the *querencia*, where the finishing thrust of the matador would await him.

He talked rather loosely of resigning and returning to private life. But where would he go? From the day on which he was

parted from the protecting arm of royalty, he would, as he knew well, immediately fall a victim to the blows of an assassin. And then too, even if he succeeded in finding some fairly secure refuge abroad, how could he do without his wealth, the flattery of his circle, the women who were at his feet? How, even more, could he do without his aged Sovereigns to whom he was tied by long-standing habit, so many memories and so many guilty secrets? Let it be said again: Manuel was not a bad-natured man, and really believed himself indispensable to the happiness, and even the life, of Charles IV and Maria Luisa.

Perhaps one last chance of safety remained. Why should not the Court of Spain follow the example of that of Portugal and set sail for America? Charles was not only King of Spain; also he was King of the Indies. There, he would still have his Crown, immense possessions, a rich treasure, an army, subjects; and besides all that, which was anyhow beyond the Corsican's power to hurt, he, Godoy, would still be all-powerful.

Following confabulations with the Queen, it was resolved to leave for Seville; from there it would be easy to reach Cadiz and sail to America. But this decision was kept wrapped in mystery and Izquierdo was permitted to return to Paris loaded with conciliatory instructions. In no great haste, and under cover of a variety of pretexts, preparations for the exodus were begun: cases of bullion were loaded on mules and set off for an unknown destination, money was distributed to the troops of the guard, the stables were alerted; lastly, the regiments quartered in the capital were, with the exception of the Swiss, ordered to fall back on Aranjuez where they would receive further instructions.

A project of this kind could not long remain a secret, and soon it became the common talk. In itself it was, no doubt, perfectly reasonable, but, coming from the favourite, who was feared less and less with every day, at once excited a passionate opposition. The Council of Ministers met and the session was stormy. The Prince of the Asturias found again the faculty of speech which he seemed to have lost since the affair of the Escorial and let it be known that he for one was not going; the Infante Antonio, brother of the King, an unobtrusive, mocking, slightly unbal-

anced person who had long hated Godoy, said the same; the Minister of Pardons and Justice, Caballero, refused, though lacking any express order from the King, to countersign the proclamation announcing the departure; Charles IV himself, though hardly knowing how to refuse Maria Luisa and Manuel anything, seemed reluctant and still undecided.

Excitement ran like a train of gunpowder from Aranjuez to the capital, which was only some ten leagues away. There, the great nobles, who were supporters of Ferdinand, maintained in their houses whole armies of lackeys; these they ordered to spread the news among the populace. The latter still preserved a religious veneration for the dynasty, and, were the King and still more the Prince of the Asturias to step off Spanish soil, it would be to them the disappearance of the country's very palladium. And what was the reason for this treasonable flight to which Ferdinand was known to be opposed? It was to save the treasures, the avarice and the lust of the 'sausage-seller', that devil's son, the execrable Godoy. It could not be allowed. Voices rose, eyes burned, fists were clenched, oaths were exchanged, here and there a knife glistened. The soldiers falling back under orders from Madrid to Aranjuez were joined by a fairly large crowd of Madrilenos, in which gentry, bourgeois and monks marched cheek by jowl with 'cads' from the lower quarters of the town and peasants from the intervening country.

It is seldom the case that the great days of popular uprising have been entirely spontaneous. Certainly the one now preparing was much to the taste perhaps of the Prince of the Asturias himself and certainly of his friends. One of these last, the Count of Montijo, an old flame of Maria Luisa's, dressed as a peasant and answering to the name of 'Father Pedro', went from group to group, fanning the excitement. The Duke of Frias and the Baron Capelleti both made themselves remarked by the violence of their language. Others, who kept away themselves, had sent their stewards and servants: these entered warmly into the fun.

The 16th March was a day of effervescence. In an attempt to calm it Godoy got the King to sign a proclamation in which reference was made to 'my dear ally, the Emperor of the French',

the implication being that there was no truth in the rumours of departure. But the manifesto was contradicted by the bustle in the courts of the chateau, where valets and grooms rushed around, carrying nailed up cases, harnessing mules and making carriages ready. The crowd groaned and refused to be comforted. This was one more trick of the 'sausage-seller's!' However, on appearing on the balcony, the King was cheered.

On Thursday, the 17th, fresh troops, and with them fresh bands of idlers, came in from Madrid. The arrival of the French Ambassador and several grandees of Spain was also announced. By nightfall a veritable world of people was milling around the garden paths and beating on the bars of the chateau. The Spanish people loves to pass an evening in the open air; if what was here involved was saving Spain, it was also a picnic in the country. Insulting language was mingled with peels of laughter, and by the light of torches pretty girls and their lovers bandied pleasantries; families had brought their sandwiches and, indifferent to the swelling tumult about them, ate their dinners on the benches in the park.

And what, all this time, was Godoy doing?

Let us give him his due: he who had seemed overcome with panic during the last few days played on this dangerous evening a good gamester's part. He presented himself as usual at the chateau and had his customary jest with Charles IV; into the ear of the Queen he poured a few hurried sentences; he greeted the Queen of Etruria who had now sought asylum with her parents; then he returned to his little house close to the park, on the left-hand side of the suspension bridge crossing the Tagus. And there he supped with his brother Diego, Duke of Almodovar, commander of the Walloon guard, and gave him his latest orders. But on that night too, as on every other, he could not do without a woman. His lawful wife, the Princess of Bourbon, was in a neighbouring room, along with the daughter born to them in marriage. But Manuel had never cared about her. Another woman was at his side, Pepita Tudo doubtless, the regular mistress, or, there were those who said, her younger sister.

Whoever the woman was, Manuel, on hearing shouts outside

the house, realised that he must part with her. A little before midnight he made her cloak herself in a mantilla and bade her get into a carriage which was waiting at the door and was already surrounded by a yelling mob. With shaking steps the veiled woman passed between two lines of servants and guards and quickly ensconced herself behind the carriage door – though not so quickly that several hands did not try to pull her mantilla off her. The coachman whipped up the horses and the carriage forced a way through. But the officer of the personal guard of the Prince of the Peace, who had stayed outside the door of the house, had violent hands laid on him by the demonstrators, mixed with whom were several bodyguards – the bodyguards with whom Godoy had started his career and who now, ever since the steps he had taken against them, detested him. A scuffle broke out; a shot was fired; a bugle call was heard – it was the signal for the assault. By the light of torches and stable lanterns, the crowd hurled itself at the door, which gave way at the first blow. The staircases and sitting rooms were invaded; amid scenes of frenzied delirium there was a tearing of precious silks and fine tapestries and a breaking of gilt furniture and Chinese porcelain; Godoy was looked for everywhere – the accursed Godoy whom all longed to stick like a wild boar at bay.

The quarry remained out of sight. In one of the bedrooms the rioters came across a terrified woman clutching a small girl in her arms. They recognised her and immediately their anger fell: this was the unfortunate wife of that evil man, the wife rendered a sacred object by the Bourbon blood flowing in her veins. She was saluted with respect and invited to enter, along with her small child, a berlin found in the coach-house; as there were no horses ready, some of the mob harnessed themselves to the carriage and drew it in triumph to the royal chateau; the Princess, much reassured, gave them their head – it was a pleasure to her to leave the house of a husband who had drenched her in humiliation and whom she would now never see again. A few days later, she was to say: ‘I hate him so much that I cannot love this child I have had by him.’

Those of the demonstrators who had stayed in Godoy’s house

left no stone unturned with a view to discovering its master. To no purpose. Manuel had at first sought refuge in the attic of a groom, and had then slipped away from there into a store-room and hidden himself under a pile of carpets and mats which lay on a divan. There he stayed, sweating with fear and heat, while all about him tramped his enemies shouting for his death and cursing the stroke of fate which had snatched their victim from them.

Outside in the gardens it was a regular bacchanalia, with soldiers of the guard refusing to obey their officers and making common cause with the rioters; illuminations were improvised, guitars appeared from somewhere, there were laughing, singing, dancing and games of pinch and tickle, while the trophies seized from Godoy's chest of drawers – uniforms, scarves, decorations, collars, grand cordons – were borne in triumph. After eddying around for a time where it was, the flood then moved towards the chateau, crying 'Long live the King', and, louder still, 'Long live Ferdinand', who was begged to appear on the balcony.

Within the chateau, Charles IV and Maria Luisa were dumb-founded; their entourage had shrunk, most of the courtiers having abandoned them to be on with their new love, the Prince of the Asturias. In their state of panic one feeling above all predominated: fear for their dear Godoy. On learning at last that he had not been taken, their hopes for his safety revived and they breathed again. To appease the fury of the people it would be enough, perhaps, to tell them that Manuel had gone far away. Morning had not yet come when the King put his signature to a decree which nearly broke his heart: 'Desiring to command in person the Army and Navy, I relieve of his commands Don Manuel Godoy, Prince of the Peace, whom I allow to retire to whatever place he chooses.'

More to be feared, however, than the mob that filled the gardens was Napoleon. How would he view what had happened? He must learn of it first from none other than Charles IV himself. The poor King could still raise enough strength of mind to sign a letter to the Corsican. But he was quite worn out and, when Beauharnais was introduced into his presence at half past five in

the morning, could hardly find strength to murmur: 'The Emperor can depend on me. I shall never leave the country. I give you my word of honour. Manuel has gone. I pity him. He has served me for twenty years, and I should be desolated if anything happened to him. I am done with generalissimos and shall march at the head of my troops myself. I will take no step without first consulting the Emperor. Let me know your ideas, my dear Ambassador, but for mercy's sake not just now; tonight has left me badly shaken.'

And the King of Spain and the Indies, whose only object of policy throughout his life had been his own tranquillity, positively tottered.

Meanwhile the day had dawned. The crowd was still there and greeted with plaudits the reading of the decree. People embraced each other and quite a number shed tears of joy. The Royal Family had to come out on the balcony, the King and Queen looking haggard, the Prince of the Asturias not hiding his satisfaction and the Infante Antonio throwing his hat in the air in token of delight. All of them were cheered. It was the classic euphoria of the first days of a revolution.



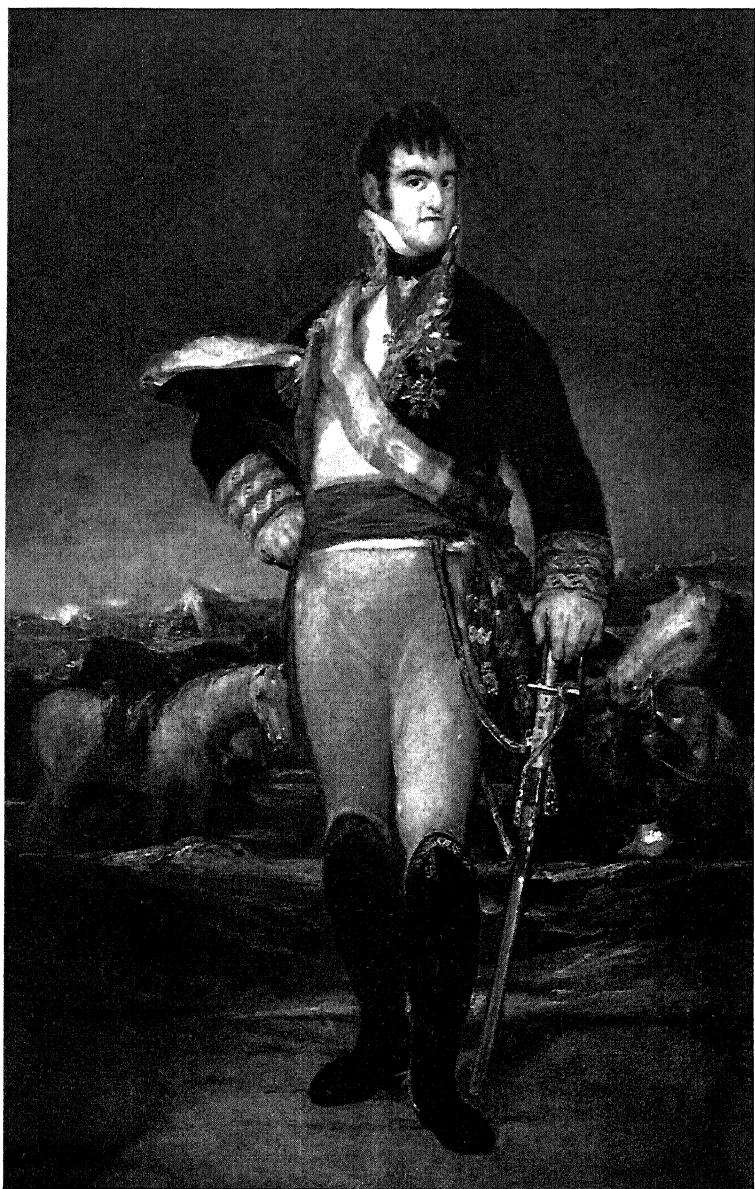
Godoy all this time still cowered beneath his carpets and mats. He was, what between fear, heat, hunger and thirst, near the end of his tether, but did not dare move because of the unceasing tramp of feet. The whole of 18th March was spent by him in this uncomfortable way, and the succeeding night too. He lost consciousness more than once. At last, feeling unable to stand any more and reckoning that a death by violence would be preferable to one by slow torture, he ventured out of his hiding-place. The sun was now high in the heaven and the time was not long before noon on the 19th: his punishment had lasted for thirty-six hours.

The wretched man descended, shaking, the staircase leading to his store-room. At the bottom of it he encountered a sentry whom he begged in an agonised murmur to give him a little water. Confronted with this wreck of a man, the soldier hesitated a

moment, then recognised who it was and called his picket. Godoy was seized at once, hustled off and put under strong guard. He had now to be transferred to some securer place. In the process he experienced fresh terrors: hardly had he set foot in the street than the crowd which was standing around the door rushed at him, spat in his face, beat him black and blue and jabbed him with knives. Only with difficulty did the soldiers get him away from his executioners; throwing an old cloak over his shoulders and thrusting a three-cornered hat on his head as best they could, they dragged him off to the quarters of the guards. 'He left his house,' relates an eye-witness, 'surrounded by a picket of body-guards and flanked by two men on horseback each of whom held him by the collar of his cloak while he supported himself on the bridles of the horses. He walked with bent back while everybody round was shouting for his blood. He had received a knife-wound in the face and a fisticuff on the mouth; he was starting to bleed at the nose and to spit blood – but his ill-treatment continued as before.'

In the end he was cast into a stable and thither before long the Prince of the Asturias, summoned in haste, came to visit him. 'Godoy,' wrote an officer who was present, 'was in a condition to melt a heart of stone – his face was covered with blood and the bleeding from a wound in his thigh had so enfeebled him that he was in a state of collapse.' He fell at the Prince's feet saying to him: 'I ask forgiveness of Your Majesty.' The Prince calmly answered him: 'Manuel, are you forgetting, then, that my father is still alive?' 'Then let Your Highness pardon my offences.' 'Manuel, the wrongs that I have received at your hands are forgiven, but Spain has an account to settle with you for the harm that you have done to her.' Then Ferdinand climbed on to a window and shouted to the crowd: 'Gentlemen, I answer for this man. He shall be tried and his punishment shall fit the gravity of his offences.'

Already the Prince was talking like the new master; the reason was that events had progressed since the previous day and that Godoy had intelligently anticipated what was round the corner. 'The same great lords who had fomented the disturbance had laid



*Picture Post Library*

FERDINAND VII OF SPAIN  
(1819-33)  
by Goya, in the Prado, Madrid



*Anderson, Rome*

PRINCE CHARLES MARIA (DON CARLOS)  
(1788-1855)  
by Goya, in the Prado, Madrid

siege to the King and had drummed into him that the fall of the favourite was not enough to turn away the people's wrath, which could only be exorcised by an abdication in favour of Ferdinand. Charles IV, whose ideas never got further than the quest for a quiet life, seemed ready for anything, but Maria Luisa had jibbed. Which of the two would prevail? The conspirators were uneasy until they knew. Fortunately for them, Caballero, the Minister of Justice, a man whose sails always caught the wind, now announced that even the lives of the Sovereigns could no longer be guaranteed. To prove it, some soldiers, having been carefully rehearsed, made threatening noises in the courtyards of the chateau. The morning of the 19th passed in anxieties of this kind; in the early afternoon the sovereigns learned of Manuel's sad fate; Ferdinand alone, they were assured, could still save him. That was the *coup de grâce*; in the evening a Council was summoned; at it the King stammered out his intention of abdicating, at which no one protested; Caballero rapidly drafted the necessary proclamation: 'As my habitual infirmities do not allow me to carry any longer the heavy burden of governing my kingdom, and needing for my health's sake to lead a life of retirement in some more temperate climate, I have decided, after the fullest consideration, to abdicate in favour of my beloved son, the Prince of the Asturias.' The text of this document was pushed beneath the hand of Charles the Fifth's successor who then appended to it the proud style and signature of the Catholic monarchs: 'I, the King.'

The riot, in which the army had played a decisive part, had won. It was to be the first of a long succession of *pronunciamentos*.

The Prince of the Asturias was now Ferdinand VII; at one fell swoop every detail of past humiliations crowded upon his memory, and a smile broadened his thin lips: he was avenged.

While on the worn flagstones of Aranjuez the crowd acclaimed the new monarch, while at Madrid a mob inflamed with fury put to sack the palace of the Admiralty, Godoy's official residence, along with the houses of his mother, his brother and his brother-in-law, while, in the provinces, his portrait was everywhere torn down and at San Lucar de Barrameda the botanical garden

founded by him was laid waste, while Murat, now only a few leagues distant from the capital, was writing to Napoleon: 'Is there anyone in Europe who would believe that I, the commander of your armies, know nothing of your plans?', while on returning to Paris, where nothing was yet known of the latest happenings, Izquierdo was talking again with Duroc and Talleyrand, while, to conclude, the whole of Spain was plunged in agitation, tumult and frenzy, the fallen favourite, shut up in his dark cell without attention, firing or any food worth speaking of, was wondering which he would die of, his wounds or a fresh explosion of popular fury.

He would not die then, had indeed another forty-three years of life before him, being still under forty-one. But his part in public affairs had ended for good, his authority would never recover and his wealth would never return. Manuel, the full-blooded, the irresistible Manuel, would be henceforward only a wandering wraith, lacking both substance and prestige; even women themselves, the very sex that had flattered him to the top of his bent, were to deny him their smile.

## CHAPTER XII

### *'A Kingdom out of the Window'*

THE SCENE now changes. Interest no longer centres on Aranjuez from which the crowd has drifted away; there, Godoy, bleeding and trembling, still languishes in prison, the fallen Sovereigns live shut up in their deserted palace, with barely a soul for company except their daughter, the ex-Queen of Etruria, and the new King is asking himself how on earth he is to put together again all the crockery he has broken.

The new centre of interest is the little village of El Molar, at the gates of Madrid, where Joachim Murat, Grand Duke of Berg, has just set up his headquarters. All eyes are on him and, nobody knowing that the Emperor has left his lieutenant entirely without instructions, everybody awaits from him the decisive words.

During these fateful days Murat belied his reputation as an empty-headed 'Beau sabreur'. He felt instinctively that Charles's abdication in favour of Ferdinand was an insignificant episode and that in fact the throne of Spain was more than half empty. To empty it completely and sit down on it – there was glory for the son of the innkeeper at Cahors! He would, in his attempts to realise this aim, display an artfulness of which few would have thought him capable.

The *leit-motif* of his little game was provided him by the ex-Queen of Etruria. On the day after the abdication, that Princess, who had had some earlier relations of a vague kind with Murat in Italy, sent him an emissary in disguise who implored him to come over and take under his protection the Sovereigns whom an unnatural son had forced to abdicate. This request acted on Murat as a beam of light: he would now play off Charles and Maria Luisa against Ferdinand, and, for a beginning, he refused to recognise Ferdinand's accession to the throne. 'If he presents himself at my headquarters,' he wrote on 21st March to Napoleon, 'I will send him to Your Majesty and then Spain really

would be without a king, the father having abdicated and the Emperor being free not to recognise the son whom it is possible to regard as an usurper.'

On the same day he sent Monthion, his aide de camp, to Aranjuez, riding his hardest. Immediately on arrival he went to see the 'old Sovereigns', whom he found prostrated and with only one idea left in their heads – to get their Manuel released. 'They want to kill the Prince of the Peace', moaned Charles, 'his only crime being that of having been faithful to me all his life. His death will be my death.' The night of 21st–22nd was spent in conferences. Charles asserted to the aide de camp that it had only been to save his own life and the Queen's that he had abdicated, but that now, weary of ruling, what he would really like would be to end his days along with his family – a word which included Godoy – on a little farm in France.

On the 22nd Monthion returned to El Molar bringing with him imploring letters to Murat: 'May the Grand-Duke', wrote Maria Luisa, 'win from the Emperor the wherewithal on which the King my husband, myself and the Prince of the Peace can live all three together, in some place that will suit our healths and where we shall know neither power nor intrigue.'

And Charles made this addition: 'I beg of you as a favour that you will bring to the Emperor's knowledge that I implore him to have set at liberty the poor Prince of the Peace, who is now suffering only from having been the friend of France, and, at the same time, to let us depart for some place which suits us, in company with the said Prince.'

To the tears of her parents the ex-Queen of Etruria joined her own. In the face of so much abjectness, Murat hesitated no longer: he sent Monthion back to Aranjuez and instructed him to submit to Charles a draft letter, antedated to 21st March, by which the luckless monarch would withdraw his abdication in favour of Ferdinand and would place his kingdom at Napoleon's disposal.

Charles, his wife agreeing, and after declaring that 'the death of the Prince of the Peace would bring in its train his own,' made no difficulty about signing: 'I have been compelled to

abdicate,' this letter runs, 'but now, placing my entire confidence in the magnanimity of the great man who has always shown himself my friend, I have resolved to fall in with whatever shall be the decision of that great man as to my fate, the Queen's fate and the fate of the Prince of the Peace. I enter my protest with Your Majesty against the proceedings at Aranjuez and against my abdication. I rely on, and entrust myself entirely to, the heart and friendship of Your Majesty.'

Monthion then returned to Murat who, clad in green velvet, booted in red leather, wearing a silken sash and a white plume, and riding at the head of his carabiniers, his cuirassiers, his hussars and his mamelukes, made a splendiferous entry into Madrid. As they passed by, the crowd surged about the soldiers, still seeing in them men who had come to free Spain from the hated favourite. Cries went up: 'Long live Napoleon! Death to Godoy!' Murat made his horse paw the ground, saluted and smiled broadly. This kingdom, thought he, was at his feet. He little knew the terrible rebounds of which the people who acclaimed him were capable.

Ferdinand VII's first act as King had been to decree the confiscation of the goods of the Prince of the Peace. Next, an order was given to take the prisoner out of his cell, tie him to a cart, send him off under strong escort to Madrid and time his entry, though by another gate, to coincide with that of the French. A diabolical idea it was: no doubt was possible that the frenzied crowd, which only the day before was still pillaging the palace of the fallen favourite, would rush upon him and tear him in pieces.

The opening phase of the plan was put into execution and Godoy, his wounds still open, was brought along towards his place of execution. But Murat had received news of what was in the wind; he had not forgotten that at one time he had been almost Manuel's friend and, more than anything else, he did not want any disturbances. 'Appalled by so much infamy,' he wrote next day to the Emperor, 'the only purpose of which was to make us witnesses of some disgraceful spectacle and force us into defending Godoy, thereby rendering ourselves an object of hatred to the population hitherto so friendly, or, in the alternative, to make ourselves accomplices, as it were, in what was

done by not opposing it, I took on myself to write to the Captain-General of Castile with a view to preventing the entry of the Prince of the Peace into Madrid. My letter produced all the effect I could have hoped!' In the event, the convoy was stopped at two leagues from Madrid and turned aside towards the little village of Pinto. There a halt was made, and Manuel was shut up in a house which was closely guarded by a strong detachment of Spanish soldiery under the command of Lieutenant-General the Marquess of Castelar. This time too Manuel got away with his life, but he was shaking with fever and quite unrecognisable beneath his growth of beard and his torn clothing: it might have been a ghost. Only six days later would instructions be given to Castelar that 'the King saw no objection to Manuel Godoy being allowed to shave himself and cut his nails, or to his being given a fork and spoon to eat with.'

Meanwhile, Ferdinand had, to Murat's great annoyance, decided to leave Aranjuez for Madrid, and on the 24th he entered Madrid by the Atocha gate with an affectation of simplicity. Mounted on a white horse, he was surrounded by a few guards and followed by only one carriage, in which were seated his uncle, the Infante Antonio, and his brother, Don Carlos. If the arrival of the French on the previous day had been greeted with cheers, it was with a frenzied enthusiasm that the new King was received today. Men and women struggled wildly to get near him, kissed his stirrups and tried to seize his hands; capes were thrown under his horse's feet, armfuls of flowers descended on him from the windows; hats, mantillas, fans floated through the air to cries of '*Olé! Olé! Viva el Rey!*' The crowd fairly bellowed with joy and gave itself up to a passionate glow of affection; the bells rang out a full peal, fireworks crackled; it might have been the dawn of a new era; after a whole century of hypochondriacal or half-witted Bourbons, *majos* and *majas* had found at last a king after their own hearts: young, vengeful, passionate and, perhaps, cruel. Borne on by a human tide whose joy was like a foam, the little procession reached the New Palace.

All this applause was gratifying, but Ferdinand well understood that his crown was precarious in the extreme so long as it was not recognised by Napoleon, or, to be going on with, by the Imperial lieutenant, Murat. And the latter, who had in his hands Charles IV's letter withdrawing his abdication, was proving reserved to say the least of it. He refused to pay a call on the new King, exchanged sweet nothings with the ex-Queen of Etruria and read with a benevolent eye the unbalanced letters showered on him by Maria Luisa, who trembled for the life of her favourite. (Between 22nd March and 30th April she sent him no fewer than seventeen letters, all of them containing pathetic appeals on behalf of 'the poor Prince of the Peace', interspersed with abuse of Ferdinand). Moreover, he received Godoy's private secretary and expressed concern over the prisoner's fate, even going so far as to write that the latter's misfortunes were due only to his devotion to the Emperor. At the same time he begged Napoleon to come to Madrid at once.

There, from the hands of his Imperial brother-in-law, he counted on receiving the diadem of the Catholic Kings. But the brother-in-law had other plans and, on 27th March, wrote to Louis, King of Holland, the historic note: 'The King of Spain has just abdicated; the Prince of the Peace has been put in prison. I have resolved to put a French prince on the throne of Spain.

The climate of Holland does not agree with you. I am thinking of you for the throne of Spain. Answer me 'yes' or 'no'. If I name you King of Spain, will you agree to become it?' Louis, who objected to being treated like a prefect, refused. But where Louis had feared to tread Murat was not destined to go: it would be the eldest Bonaparte brother, Joseph, who would benefit, by a compulsory swap of the crown of Naples for that of Spain.

Meantime, it vexed the people of Madrid to see their adored Sovereign treated with so little respect by the French. Had these last, then, some purpose in coming other than that of punishing Godoy? The anti-French agitation, which had been raging in the Northern provinces for some little time, reached the capital. Soldiers were insulted in the streets, quarrels broke out, blood flowed. Murat kept up a show of confidence, but was uneasy in

his heart. Feeling that Ferdinand's presence at Madrid was a standing invitation to trouble, he pressed him to go off to his rendezvous with Napoleon, who had at last announced his coming. Then, as the new King hesitated, he plotted to take him there by force.

Ferdinand guessed what was brewing. To regularise his position and render irrevocable the abdication in favour of himself, he planned to create, for his father's benefit and for the term of his life, an independent sovereignty in the Balearics. Thither the old monarchs could retire in Godoy's company. But Charles IV and Maria Luisa, who, if that were possible, hated their son even more than they loved their favourite, refused, and refused also, a few days later, to write to the Emperor the 'letter of recommendation' which Ferdinand, now at his wits' end what shrine to worship at, in the end asked of them. Charles IV would, perhaps, have given way had not Maria Luisa stormed at him publicly: 'Look what a spineless husband heaven has given me.' The poor King, as was usual with him, said nothing.

On 9th April, the royal couple left Aranjuez for the Escorial, where the protection of General Mouton's French Grenadiers put them beyond the reach of any pressure from Ferdinand.

With the Emperor already at Bordeaux and said to be arriving at Bayonne before long, Ferdinand, harassed on every side and with death in his soul, decided to set off for his meeting with him. He left Madrid on 10th April, accompanied by a few councillors, among whom was Escoïquiz, and also by Savary, Napoleon's handyman. At each relay, the coach drew up by French sentry-posts. The Spaniards' darling monarch was already virtually a prisoner.

The other prisoner, the Prince of the Peace, had by now left Pinto. The village having been occupied by French troops, the Spanish authorities were afraid that he might be liberated by force. Therefore, on 3rd April, they had Godoy transferred to Villaviciosa where he was shut up in the chateau's chapel which had been converted into a prison. A force of impressive size was used to guard him: one hundred and eleven bodyguards, one hundred and fifty-seven Lusitanian dragoons, two hundred and thirteen

local grenadiers, eighty-seven Aragonese volunteers – or five hundred and seventy-eight men in all. Castelar, their commander, had orders to kill Manuel rather than let him escape.

The object of all these precautions was by now nearly back to normal. His robust constitution had got the better of his poorly tended wounds, and hardly more than one scar, just above the eye, was still visible. His general appearance completely reassured Murat's aide de camp who had been sent to visit him. He had recovered, too, his flow of spirits, humorously protested against the discomforts of his prison and demanded back his own staff of servants along with Maria Luisa's confessor; he claimed that, Villaviciosa being a dependency of the county of Chinchon which belonged to his wife, he was now at home and that the *alcalde* should come to pay him homage; lastly, he asserted that he had been locked up only for reasons of personal safety and would shortly return to full favour. Sometimes he opened out to his warders, telling them that his one weakness had been 'loving the other sex as all men do up to the age of forty', and he would talk to them of his past conquests, Marie Michel especially whom he had got to know through 'his friend Murat'. His conversation was larded throughout with cursings and moanings; to his daughter, Carlotta, who came to see him, he complained bitterly of having no money and only one shirt – and a very worn and dirty one at that.

These bitter cries nearly broke Maria Luisa's heart when they were brought to her ears, and her letters to Murat imploring him to have Manuel released became more frequent than ever: on 9th April alone she sent him three. The Grand Duke was the more disposed to do what she asked on learning, on 14th April, that Napoleon planned to bring all the recent masters of Spain within range of his own paw at Bayonne. So he addressed himself to the Supreme Junta to which Ferdinand had, on leaving Madrid, entrusted his government, and invited them, through the mouth of General Belliard, to give orders for the release of the Prince of the Peace. 'The government and the Spanish militia', said Belliard to the Junta, 'will find in this decision of His Imperial Majesty's but one more proof of His concern for Spain, for, by

taking the Prince of the Peace right away, He aims at making it impossible for the malevolent to think for a moment that Charles IV could ever give back power and his confidence to a man who has deserved to lose them.'

Murat communicated the substance of this message to Charles IV who told the messenger that this decision 'gave him back life, for he would beyond question have died, had he been condemned to continue for any time separated from his dear Manuel.'

The Junta was much annoyed but could do no other than obey. The order of release was signed and, on 21st April at three o'clock in the morning, Castelar, with tears in his eyes and rage in his heart, handed his prisoner over to General Exelmans and Colonel Rossetti, who was Murat's aide de camp. Godoy was wearing a six inch beard, had on a big military greatcoat, wore slippers, and seemed nervous. The two officers put him in a carriage which drove off to the French camp at Chamartin, near the gates of Madrid. 'When we arrived at the outer boulevards', wrote Rossetti, 'it was broad daylight and the peasants were just coming in from the environs with their goods for market. Such was the Prince's terror of being recognised that he sat hunched up at the back of the carriage and we had difficulty in persuading him that he had nothing to fear and in getting him back to his seat. And this was the man who had, as caprice and pleasure directed, governed Spain and the Indies for twelve years.'

At dawn on 22nd April, Godoy was pushed into a berlin, placed in the charge of Colonel Manhès, another of Murat's aides de camp, and driven off towards Bayonne where Ferdinand had already been for two days and whither Charles and Maria Luisa were also about to go.

The liberation of the ex-favourite was quickly known at Madrid, where it caused much bad feeling. 'The Emperor,' wrote Rémond, a police officer attached to Murat, 'does not know the Spanish. They will never forgive him for having snatched their prey away from them.'

The Infante Don Antonio, President of the Supreme Junta, reported on these events in a letter to his nephew at Bayonne, the truculent tone of which is in marked contrast to the formal

style of Murat's dispatches to his brother-in-law Napoleon; as between the Infante of Spain and the son of the innkeeper, it is the former who appears as the 'commoner man' of the two.

'The vermin (Maria Luisa),' wrote Don Antonio, 'writes gleefully to the Grand Duke of Berg and has obtained from him the release of the sausage-selling Prince; but it is your ineffable father who begged more warmly still that the sausage-seller might be freed and not have his head cut off. The tender pair are still at the Escorial, guarded by those traitors of carabinieri and the French soldiers under General Wattier – a drunkard who snores at table when the dessert is brought in. That I have from a good source. Your father, who is crippled with rheumatism, says that his aches are thorns which you have nailed into his heart. Where the devil did my brother pick up such elegant expressions? The vermin must have put him up to them. In demanding from my colleagues on the Supreme Junta the liberation of Godoy, Murat pretended that it was you, when you were just setting off from Madrid, who had given the order for his release. What rubbish! Why did you never tell it to me? My colleagues pocketed the affront and gave way like the poor fish they are, so you will soon be seeing the favourite again where you are. Why was he not hung when I told you to hang him? Luisetta from Etruria asserts that she talked about the thing with Murat in his bedroom. Was ever a woman so unblushing? Those who demanded Godoy's liberty are my brother and the vermin, who was ready to burst into tears and go on her knees, and the Frenchman who had undertaken to save the prisoner. The bodyguards, who are real gentlemen, refused to give him up, and the job was done by the grenadiers of the province. There is a tit-bit for both of us. The bodyguards would have freed him only to the gibbet. However, our friend is now in the hands of Colonel Manhès and you will soon be seeing him at Bayonne.'

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Escorted by a troop of cavalry, Godoy's carriage rolled on towards France with hardly a stop at the posting-houses. First, the Castilian plateaux, yellow, violet and red, on which the corn

was ripening; next Valladolid, mournful and proud, Charles V's old capital; then the towers of the cathedral of Burgos and the sharp defiles of Pancorbo; the countryside is now greener and hillier; here are Vitoria and the torrential Ebro, on the horizon the Pyrenees are outlined; the way goes through the foothills; cork-oaks, larches and pines line the road; the zigzags grow in number; to the sound of cascades a col is crossed and the other side descended; afar off gleams the sea; and all of a sudden here is the Bidassoa, and its bridge is crossed amid a great rattle of wheels: it is France, safety, exile.

On leaving Spain, now never to be seen again, whose absolute master he had been for sixteen years almost without a break, Godoy must, for all the terrible memories that still gripped him, have felt a tug at his heart. After his fashion he had loved his country, whose destinies chance had entrusted to him, and he had done what he could to keep her out of the hurricane which, rising in France, was now shaking the whole of Europe; he had understood that Spain's old ways of life, her traditions and prejudices, accorded ill with the new era which was opening; he had desired to adapt and modernise her, and get her round a difficult corner without too much damage to herself; but, though the wish had been genuine, it had been unaccompanied by either energy in action or, worst of all, personal disinterestedness. And all that he had of skill, cunning and intrigue had in the end failed helplessly before a twofold obstacle – the violence of Napoleon and the violence of Spain.

Was it partly due to the Portuguese strain in him? Manuel had not divined the flame of passion which lurked in the hearts of Spaniards. He had not pierced below the Spain he knew when first he appeared at Court, the Spain so seemingly likeable and easygoing and pleasure-loving, the Spain of Goya's tapestries. No conception had he ever had of the turbulent, passionate and sometimes disordered Spain of the 'Caprices' – still less of her that followed, the Spain of the 'Disaster of War'. By 1808, all was over with feather-brained *petimetres* and saucy *majas*. The fun and the laughter had departed; if mouths were no less sensual, a curling hatred had now fastened on them; the spread

of France's philosophy had done no more than light a new passion at whose touch the old religious ardour burned more strongly. And Manuel, the most voluptuous but least passionate of men, was swept away in the storm which fanned the brazier.

In the first canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Byron wrote soon after:

'How carols now the lusty muleteer?  
Of Love, Romance, Devotion is his lay,  
As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,  
His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?  
No! As he speeds, he chants 'Viva el Rey!'  
And checks his song to execrate Godoy,  
The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day  
When first Spain's queen beheld the black eyed boy,  
And gore-faced treason sprung from her adulterous joy.'

It was now 26th April and the Basque coast gleamed in a silvery light; Béhobie, Saint Jean de Luz, high plane trees, green pastures. On all sides were bivouacs, encampments and troops of the Guard at exercise; from a certain fervour in their evolutions and from the correctness of their uniforms, it was clear that the eye of the master was not far away. The berlin halted at Bayonne and Godoy was ushered into a modest house. There, while he mended his appearance, he learned the news of the last few days, of the Emperor's refusing to recognise Ferdinand as King of Spain, of the latter's indignant surprise at being thus tricked, of his hesitations and of the despair of his entourage.

Hardly had the fallen favourite finished asking for details when he was told that Napoleon awaited him at his headquarters at Marrac, on the road to Biarritz. In former days Godoy had ardently longed for such a meeting, counting on the effects of his personal charm on the alarming Corsican. But today, after what he had undergone at Aranjuez, he felt less sure of his charm. So he arrived in a weary, depressed frame of mind, looking nervously about him in all directions.

To the general surprise Napoleon received him affably. He had always felt some curiosity about the Prince of the Peace, who, though his contemporary, had climbed to power at an

earlier age than himself and had sincerely desired a good understanding between France and Spain. Also, no doubt, he reflected that he could still put Manuel, with his adroitness, to good purpose against Ferdinand. In short, he made solicitous enquiry about Godoy's health and the situation of his family, promised him his support and, at the end of an hour's talk, sent him away reassured. Soon after he wrote to Talleyrand: 'The Prince of the Peace is beginning to recover the use of his senses; he has the air of a bull with something of Daru thrown in.'

On 30th April, at the Southern entrance to Bayonne, the troops lined the road, the civil authorities were formed up, and the guns of the citadel and shore-fortifications fired salvoes of honour: it had been the Emperor's wish that Charles IV and Maria Luisa, whose cavalcade was in view, should be received on arrival with all royal honours. Arrive they did in their antique of a carriage, halted in front of the seat of the government and got out: the Queen seemed anxious, but her husband was very much at his ease, speaking very loudly and talking to everyone. On seeing his second son, Don Carlos, he gave him a dry 'good-day'; but at sight of Ferdinand he cried out: 'Have you not brought sorrow enough on my white hairs? Be off. I do not want to see more of you.' Then he caught sight of Manuel and, as was to be expected, fell into his arms.

The arrival of Napoleon put a stop to these orgies of emotion and devotion. His guests were in plaintive mood: 'Your Majesty does not know', sighed Charles, 'what it means to have an undutiful son'. On the following day the Emperor invited the couple to dinner. On arriving in the dining room, the King observed that there was no place laid for Godoy, who was in fact dining below the salt with Duroc. So he fussed about, asking where Manuel was. The Emperor, much amused, sent someone in search of the favourite, who was already at table; Charles then brightened up and did honour to the meal with a truly Bourbon appetite: 'Luisa', he said to his wife on coming upon a particularly toothsome dish, 'have some more of this; it is really good.'

This lack of sensibility in a prince torn from the heritage of his fathers and for practical purposes a prisoner shocked his con-

temporaries and still shocks us. To find excuse for it, we need to realise how Charles IV looked on the royal power.

Kingship was not for him, what it had been for his great-great-grandfather Louis XIV, a 'craft'; rather it was an 'estate' with the advantages and duties that appertain to estates of any kind. That the advantages should ever take second place to the duties had never crossed his mind and the only condition on which he wanted to be king was that it did not cause him too much trouble. As a landed proprietor delegates the administration of his property to a steward who has his full confidence, so he had delegated the administration of his kingdom to Godoy. Not long after this time he said to Napoleon: 'I used to hunt every day. In the evening Manuel would tell me whether things were going well or ill, and then I went to bed.' The remark reveals the country gentleman, not the ruler.

But the country gentleman's heir had been unable to wait for his father's death before reaching out his hand for his estate. Such was then the old man's anger that he preferred to see the inheritance pass to a neighbour rather than leave it in the hands of this thankless son. The latter he disinherited and, helped by his faithful steward, negotiated the property's sale, himself intending, when the business was over, to settle down in peace on a small farm which would worry him much less than the management of a vast estate.

Though Napoleon certainly had not got the same conception of sovereign power as a patrimony as had this feeble successor of Charles V, his eagle eye saw at once the way to turn to advantage the inclinations of his guest.

On 30th April, he wrote to Murat: 'I must unravel all this tangle during the next two days.' On 2nd May, he got Charles to write a letter in which he notified his son that his misdeeds had rendered him utterly unworthy to succeed to the throne and that Spain 'could now be saved only by the Emperor'. Then he sought Godoy's agreement – readily given – and brought him, on 4th May, to get the aged monarch's signature to a decree appointing Murat Lieutenant-General of the realm. A bridge had now been thrown between the Bourbon and Bonaparte dynasties.

On the 5th, Godoy drafted in conjunction with Duroc and initialled without hesitation a treaty by which the King 'whose only object throughout his life had been the happiness of his subjects', yielded to Napoleon, or to the prince whom he should nominate, all his rights over Spain and the Indies, the only conditions being that he would respect the territorial integrity of the realm and would not tolerate in it any religion other than the Catholic; in return, the ex-Sovereign would receive the Chateaux of Compiègne and Chambord with their parks, together with an annual subvention of six million francs; in the event of his death, his widow would receive as dower an annuity of two million; the children would each receive four hundred thousand francs a year; Manuel saw to the insertion of a provision that the goods of 'all faithful subjects' should be returned to them.

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On the afternoon of the same day grave news reached Bayonne: the insurrection at Madrid.

The Emperor had given orders for the dispatch to Bayonne of the only members of the royal family who remained in the capital: the Infante Antonio, brother of the King, the ex-Queen of Etruria and her young brother, Francisco de Paula. The crowd had sensed their imminent departure, which generated the most intense emotion: to have no more Bourbons in Spain would be the final symbol of her vanishing independence. Indignation grew and gave place to frenzy. On the morning of 1st May, several isolated French soldiers were attacked; in the afternoon, a squadron of cavalry, which was passing at a walk through the Puerta del Sol, was greeted with broadsides of catcalls.

On the morning of 2nd May the people surrounded the berlins which were standing ready for departure before the outer gate of the palace. When the Infante Francisco de Paula appeared a chorus of indignant protest was raised. An aide de camp of Murat's, who had come to salute the Princess, was surrounded and hustled. The noise brought running up some grenadiers from a neighbouring post; they were received with pistol shots and replied with gunfire.

Murat, having been recently reproached by the Emperor for weakness, decided to take strong action. He had the alarm sounded, set in movement the regiments quartered in the outskirts and threw them into Madrid, through various gates, in the direction of the Puerta del Sol. This display of force, so far from calming down the Madrilenos, exacerbated them. Arms appeared on every hand, and shots were fired through the closed shutters on the French columns as they passed; isolated detachments were attacked and stragglers massacred. Murat then ordered the cavalry – dragoons, huzzars and mamelukes – to charge. Pushed back by the breasts of the horses, beaten with sabres and yataghans, the crowd at first swirled around on the Puerta and then scattered into the nearby alleys, leaving behind them dead and wounded in large numbers.

Only at about two o'clock in the afternoon did the outbreak seem definitely under control. Martial law was proclaimed and hastily constituted military commissions condemned to death all insurgents caught with arms in their hands. All night long and at dawn of the following day the firing squads were at work at the Retiro gate, in Buen Suceso court and on Principe Pio hill.

In the course of the two days, 2nd and 3rd May, not more than three hundred Madrilenos seem to have been killed as against about one hundred and fifty Frenchmen. But the memory of those days – a memory which would, six years later, be stamped for ever by Goya on two avenging canvases – was destined never to fade from Spanish hearts; the days marked the dawning of their victorious fight for independence.

The Frenchmen on the spot, as was natural, had no conception at all of the event's importance, and La Forest, diplomatic agent to Murat, wrote to Champagne: 'Ferdinand's party was completely routed in the shape of the *canaille* which it had put in the forefront of the battle.'

When, at Bayonne, Napoleon heard what had happened, he saw in it a pretext for breaking down Ferdinand's last attempts at resistance. He summoned him to his father's presence, turned up there himself and hurled at him violent reproaches, accusing him of having fomented the disturbance. The old King acted as

chorus: 'The blood of my subjects has been shed,' he cried, 'and the blood of the soldiers of my great friend Napoleon! You are in part responsible for this slaughter.' The Queen, almost beside herself, heaped insults on her son and clamoured for his death on a scaffold. The Emperor ignored this hot fit and spoke the decisive word to the unhappy Prince: 'If between now and midnight you have not recognised your father as your lawful king, and do not so inform Madrid, you will be treated by me as a rebel.'

Ferdinand, at his tether's end, agreed. On 6th May he sent his father the declaration required by Napoleon; Escoïquiz had drafted it in terms which were as dignified as the situation allowed. On the same day Charles IV ratified the treaty drawn up by Duroc and Godoy, by which he yielded his crown to Napoleon, who had already disposed of it to Joseph. The curtain now fell on the tragi-comedy of Bayonne.

Nothing was now left but for the actors to depart whither the destiny of each drew him. The destiny of the Prince of the Peace was merely to outlive himself.

On 12th May, Charles and Maria Luisa entered the gilded coach, shaky and cumbersome and weighted down with lackeys, which was to carry them to exile at Compiègne. With them was Manuel. Behind them, in other carriages, were the Infante Francisco de Paula, perhaps the favourite's son, and Carlotta, his legitimate daughter whom Maria Luisa had brought with her from Spain. Several berlins, containing some loyal gentry, doctors, chaplains and servants, came next. The baggage carts brought up the rear. The journey was made in short stages, for the convoy was both long and slow. As it passed by, French townsmen and peasants pondered with a mixture of astonishment and pity the funeral of an ancient monarchy. The King seemed, on the whole, a nice-looking, well-preserved man, but quite expressionless. The Queen looked like some aged pixie. Those who recognised Godoy thought his air plebeian.

Fontainebleau was reached at last and there a halt was made of several days. Then on to the Château of Compiègne, the permanent address.

The King, who was made to feel easy by the mere sight of a

forest with game in it, declared himself quite satisfied and spoke with esteem of his 'good friend Napoleon', and the Queen was glad to be able to get some rest at long last; Manuel, whose dreams were still sometimes haunted by the frightful events of Aranjuez, also looked forward to peace and quiet and seemed, as Chateaubriand wrote, 'resigned to cultivating melons after having thrown a kingdom out of the window.'

But in the neighbourhood of Napoleon peace was a mere chimera and the 'earthly trinity' was not at the end of its tribulations.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *The trinity in exile*

COMPIEGNE in the early summer. The full-grown trees, the tufted foliage where so many different shades of green meet and agree, the fine sand, the pipings of birds, the lightly misted sky: how far away they seem, the harsh landscapes of the Escorial and the relaxing mildness of Aranjuez! It is exile at its best.

The little Court about Charles IV and Maria Luisa grew in the meanwhile: the first arrival was the ex-Queen of Etruria who came in from Bayonne, angry and querulous, and in a state of agitation very different from the resignation of her parents. Next came a few old courtiers who found existence away from their masters inconceivable. There followed Godoy's younger brother, Diego, Duke of Almodovar del Campo, who had managed to escape from Spain. Pepita Tudo, Countess of Castillo Fiel, Godoy's mistress, came last: arrested in Andalusia, she had begged Murat's protection and the latter had set her free. Now here she was, along with the two small sons, Manuel and Luis, born of her by her lover, and followed by her mother, Doña Catilina, and her two sisters, Magdalena and Socorro. The Queen was pleased to see the whole family; as old age drew near – she was now fifty-seven – the maternal side of her passion for Manuel definitely carried the day over jealousy, and anyone whom Manuel loved she loved.

This little world squeezed as best it could into the strictly limited accommodation placed at its disposal. Napoleon had not driven the Spanish Sovereigns from their throne to let them become a nuisance to himself. 'You may house Charles IV,' he wrote to Duroc on 16th May, 'in one of the lodges for putting up foreign kings, giving as excuse that the large apartments are not furnished. In time he will get used to being where he is, and then I shall have the use of the palace myself when I want to stay there for big hunting battues.'

Charles, notwithstanding his apathy, grumbled a little. Godoy protested more loudly and talked of taking up his abode in the capital. Napoleon, whom nothing escaped though he was still at Bayonne, let fall this contemptuous phrase in another note to Duroc: 'As for the Prince of the Peace, he is a quite unimportant person; let him live at Paris wherever he likes.' However, the plan came to nothing.

Not only was the accomodation bad at Compiègne, but money was also short. The first monthly payments of the subvention promised by the Emperor were in arrear.

With boredom grew bitterness. The news from Spain came in confusedly. It was known that Joseph, having entered on his new kingdom, had found most of it in rebellion; it was learnt vaguely that there had been fierce and bloody disturbances at Cartagena, Cadiz, Seville and Valencia, that Saragossa was under siege, that resistance was taking organised shape, that Dupont's French corps, having been beaten at Baylen, had capitulated in the field, that hardly had the 'intruder king' arrived at Madrid than he had been forced to leave it, that General Wellesley had disembarked in Portugal at the head of nine thousand men and was offering an alliance with Great Britain to the Spanish people. Much difference all that made to the exiles! What mattered to them was that, with return of autumn, Charles IV had realised that the surrounding forest was more poorly supplied with birds and beasts to hunt than he had reckoned.

Where there was not enough to hunt it was impossible to stay for long. Besides, the general dampness was making the King's sciatica worse. Nothing was now thought of but getting away. Enquiry was made as to Chambord, which had been promised under the treaty of 6th May: the reply was discouraging. Thoughts then turned to the Mediterranean coast, Nice or Marseilles. This time, the Emperor made no difficulty; he asked nothing better than that these embarrassing witnesses should get as far away as possible.

Once more carriages, berlins and carts were loaded up, and, on 20th September, the wandering Court of two hundred souls set off for the south-east. The ex-Queen of Etruria, who had got

herself into trouble with the Imperial police, stayed behind.

On 4th October, the party arrived at Aix-en-Provence. The old city, once the seat of a 'Parlement', with its splendid houses, its plane trees and its fountains, pleased Charles IV, who talked of settling there. Godoy, melancholy and resigned, tried to get a property on lease, but the price asked seemed too high, and the convoy set off again for Marseilles.

There it arrived on 18th October, just at the time that at Erfurt Napoleon had, as he thought, bound Alexander to his chariot wheels. The idlers in the streets marvelled at the gilded coach, drawn by six white mules, of the Spanish Sovereigns, and as they still had Bourbon sympathies, amused themselves by shouting: 'Vive le roi!' But, when Godoy passed, several rounds of hissing greeted him.

The prefect of the Bouches du Rhône, Thibaudeau, once of the Convention, viewed the arrival of these rather compromising visitors with some displeasure. The better to keep an eye on them, he forbade their settling in the suburbs and put at their disposal a house in the centre of the town.

The fallen Sovereigns and their entourage were destined to stay at Marseilles for nearly four years; their life there was regular, monotonous and simple, though the burden of etiquette was still crushing. Every morning the King went out with Godoy, and took a walk as often as not through the poorer quarters of the town where he distributed lavish alms. On returning home, he ate an ample meal, took a siesta, played the violin or bound books for a little, and then, with the Queen and, naturally, Godoy for company, took a drive along the promenade in his carriage. Here and there he would get out; several Frenchmen would be presented to him, several Spaniards would kiss his hand. On his return he held a reception, to which the local worthies and their wives were sometimes admitted. One day he asked the wife of Thibaudeau, the prefect: 'How many children have you, madame?' 'Three, Sire.' 'Only three! Why, my Luisa has given me twelve. She is a good mother and a good wife. She has never given me the slightest anxiety.'

At ten o'clock sharp the King went off to bed, while Maria

Luisa stayed behind a little to chat with Godoy, Pepita Tudo and Pepita's sisters, whom she had made ladies of honour, and a few others too. The next day would be just like its predecessor.

In the end, the prefect authorised the purchase of the important estate of Maffargues, about four miles from Marseilles; there the King hoped to get his fill of the pleasures of the chase. But here again he was disappointed: the game was quite unworthy of him, only a few birds of indifferent quality and an occasional rabbit.

Money difficulties got steadily worse. At the end of 1809 the monthly dole which Napoleon had promised under the Treaty of Bayonne was by Imperial order reduced from five hundred thousand to two hundred thousand francs. To get something to keep them going, Godoy applied to Izquierdo, his old confidential agent, whom he got Charles IV to dignify with the entirely empty title of Secretary of State: Izquierdo sent sixty thousand francs. Jewels and plate were taken to the pawnshop. The Marquess of Branciforte, Manuel's brother-in-law, made a present of a substantial sum. By these means the most pressing debts were in time settled. All the same, part of the stable had to be sold and several servants had to be got rid of.

Another cause of uneasiness was the ex-Queen of Etruria who had been sent to Nice under the close supervision of the police. Several attempts at helping her escape were made by loyal servants, but these all failed; she was separated from her young son, threatened with imprisonment and, in the end, transferred to Rome in August 1811; there she was shut up in the convent of Saint Dominic and Saint Sixtus. Charles IV and Maria Luisa felt deeply the misfortunes of their favourite daughter and were in any case tired of living at Marseilles; they talked of rejoining her, if possible, at Rome.

Nothing could be done until Godoy's opinion had been obtained, and Godoy too was anxious to leave Marseilles. It had taken him a matter of years to recover completely from his terrible experiences in March and April 1808; but the patriarchal way of life at Marseilles in the midst of his mistresses and children, legitimate and illegitimate, had brought him back all his old

energy. His one desire was for a change of venue, when he might, who could tell? be able to try his luck once more.

Meanwhile, in Spain, events had moved on. Napoleon had gone there in person with a view to expelling from the country the English, now the allies of the insurgent Spaniards; he had won some victories, but the warlike preparations of Austria and the intrigues of Talleyrand had forced him, after two months, to make a hurried return to Paris, leaving the feeble Joseph to govern, and jealous and avaricious marshals to carry on military operations. Defeats alternated with victories, but the latter were later undone by the implacable guerilla warfare which the Spaniards, spurred on by the Supreme Junta in refuge at Cadiz, waged in the rear of the French troops. The wretchedness and the demoralisation of the latter now grew apace. In vain were hastily levied contingents of conscripts sent to reinforce them: fire-arms, daggers and, above all, disease, thinned their ranks more and more with every day that passed. In May 1811 Masséna left Portugal. The enemy pressed home his advantage and even as early as the beginning of 1812 the whiff of defeat was in the air. Goya, who had at first backed the 'intruder king' and painted his portrait, was now in the opposite camp to the French; shutting himself up in the isolated house and garden overlooking Madrid, which he had lately bought – 'the House of the Deaf Man' – he engraved his 'Disasters of War' – those sixty etched engravings of nightmare, in which he fixed for ever the fearful memory of every horror that an unbridled soldiery at grips with a fanatical people can commit.

It could not be claimed that the little Court at Marseilles was deeply shaken by these great events, or that it burned with the patriotic ardour then engulfing the people of Spain. Charles was too old, too much the addict to his own tranquillity, Manuel kept in his heart, since Aranjuez, too many bitter memories of his compatriots, the little circle of courtiers had been too much uprooted. Maria Luisa started, however, with the violence natural to her, on a course of complaint and abuse in regard to Napoleon.

Intrigue raised its head about the evicted Sovereigns. An ex-

bodyguard, who was a friend of Manuel's, offered to smuggle the exiles aboard the British fleet which was cruising off the coast; he was denounced and imprisoned in the Chateau d'If. After him, Barras, the old member of the Directory and protector of the Empress Josephine, suggested another idea of the kind – the only reason for its failure was, perhaps, that the English Admiral, when approached, refused to take Godoy on board: the King declared himself as preferring 'to remain at the mercy of the oppressive tyrant' rather than abandon Manuel.

The Emperor, who was more disturbed by the news from Spain than he cared to admit and was now preparing to bury himself in the Russian steppes, considered that the continued presence of the old Royal Family in a large Mediterranean seaport had become inexpedient. Since Charles and Maria Luisa wanted to join forces again with their daughter at Rome, let them go there. But the journey must be incognito. There must be no triumphal arches or visits from local authorities or official harangues. This was no moment for calling attention to the fact that anyone other than Joseph Bonaparte had a right to call himself King of Spain and the Indies.

Yet once again, preparation, packing, harnessing up, setting off. The Marseilles crowd, who felt grateful to the fallen Sovereigns for their many acts of generosity and sympathised with them in their misfortunes, greeted them with cheers. Godoy was hardly noticed. Four years after his fall he was already only a name.

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It was on 16th July 1812 that the cumbrous and old-fashioned carriages entered the Eternal City, then glorying in the status of a French prefecture. The party took up its abode provisionally in the Borghese Palace and the life of exile continued on its way.

The contemporary memoirs enable us to be present at some of the moments in this monotonous and ludicrous existence.

Here is the family circle: in the centre the King, still in good health but crippled with gout, rather untidy sometimes, in his shirt-sleeves, wearing nankin waistcoat and breeches, mopping his forehead with a red silk handkerchief. At his side the Queen,

old beyond all question, but still bedizened, still made up, still petulant. Then Godoy, thick and gross, with half-closed eyes, wearing whiskers and looking for all the world, in his black coat, like a minor official. Next a group of young people: the Infante Francisco de Paula, with his strong resemblance to the Prince of the Peace; Carlotta, the latter's legitimate daughter, now nearly fifteen years of age and become Duchess of Sueca; Manuel and Luis, the little bastards, who are eleven and ten respectively. After them, a bevy of women: Pepita Tudo, who is getting fat but retains the velvet of her Andalusian eyes, her mother, her two sisters; the Marchioness of Branciforte, sister of the favourite, who, on her husband's death, had run for shelter with her brother, and one other widow, Doña Carmen Alvarez de Faria, his cousin. In the background, one more man, another relation of Manuel's, his brother Diego, Duke of Almodovar del Campo, who has received the empty title of Grand Equerry. To conclude, a few supers, most of them linked by some tie or other to Godoy's family or to his morganatic 'in laws'.

One person was conspicuous by her absence: Godoy's wife, the reason being that she had not left Spain, had sought refuge with her brother, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, and had sworn never to see her husband more.

This little world apart chattered, trifled, laughed about nothing, cried over even less, sometimes quarrelled – and all gravitated about the favourite.

Charles, placid as ever, spent his time in buying pictures and in doing up the innumerable watches which he had collected and of which he always carried four or five about with him. He was not a little self-satisfied and confided one day to Lord Holland that he had always done what Napoleon had certainly been incapable of doing – kept a journal day by day, even at Bayonne: in that respect he was the better man of the two. From time to time he would make one of a quartette and leave his partners breathless by the speed of his playing. The other members of the family amused themselves as best they could.

One day a Frenchman, bearing an introduction from Bassuet, prefect of the Imperial palace, was presented to the Sovereigns.

He was warmly welcomed and, to entertain him, the Queen, having sent the girls off to hunt out Godoy's old uniforms, begged the latter on their return to put them on. Manuel complied with a good grace and disported himself successively in his cast-off uniforms of Councillor of State, Minister, Generalissimo, Inspector-General of Artillery and Grand Admiral. 'Walk, Manuel, walk!' called Maria Luisa. 'How handsome he is!' she murmured, all of a flutter. 'How handsome he is!' echoed Charles. And the whole of the little Court exclaimed with one voice: 'How unbelievably handsome he is!' We can imagine the visitor's suppressed merriment.

Though of an equable enough temper, the favourite sometimes found himself fatigued by this inescapable devotion. Sometime he wanted to be alone, or at least with his old flame only by his side. They had so many memories in common! To assure himself of uninterrupted conversation with her, he had to resort, if we can trust the gossips, to some strange subterfuges. Here is one of them as related by Stendhal in his *Promenades dans Rome* – not, however, a very reliable authority:

'In 1812 Manuel bought the Villa Mattei – the house in whose gardens Saint Philip Neri used to talk to his disciples in the sixteenth century. There he had dug a little pool on which he floated a two-seater boat; sometimes he got into this boat with the Queen and there talked to her tête à tête; but the King, who had stopped on the edge, would at once feel out in the cold and call out: 'Manuel, come back. You have had enough!''

It was from the depths of this wan existence that the little Court heard the preliminary cracks foreshadowing the collapse of the Napoleonic régime and learned of the vicissitudes of the Spanish drama: of the French giving way under the double pressure of the English and the insurgents; of the 'intruder king' being expelled once more from Madrid; of the Imperial armies being thrown back as far as Burgos, then farther still, of their being beaten at Vitoria and almost driven from Spain; of the Emperor, on the morrow of his defeat at Leipzig, releasing Ferdinand from the chateau of Valençay, in which, since 1808, he had held him in a gilded captivity; of the return to Madrid in

March 1814 of the beloved Prince in whose name the Spaniards had fought savagely for six years; of the reprisals he took; of the campaign in France; of the collapse of the colossus; of the return of the French Bourbons; of the exile of the fallen Caesar to Elba.

In spite of everything, Charles and Maria Luisa had never nourished any real bitterness against Napoleon, thanks to whose brother-in-law the life of Manuel had been saved just after the days of Aranjuez. Bitterness they kept entirely for their son. And now here was this son the undisputed master of Spain and the fallen Sovereigns no better than his subjects. His savage hatred of Godoy was known not to have abated and the little clan felt most uneasy.

Uneasiness was justified: Ferdinand VII was not long in causing the exiles trouble.

In September 1814 the Catholic King's Ambassador to the Pope, now reinstated in the Chair of Saint Peter, landed at Civitavecchia. This ambassador was Antonio Vargas Laguna, a lawyer by training and a policeman by nature, who had, like Godoy, been born at Badajoz and had received advancement from him, but was now filled with a veritable hatred for his old protector.

Hardly had he been accredited than he made one *démarche* after another to the Curia for the expulsion of Manuel from the Papal States. They were, however, not as yet successful when, like a clap of thunder, the news broke of the return from Elba. The Emperor again ruled at the Tuileries, Murat had left his Neapolitan kingdom and was marching on Rome. Charles and Maria Luisa, caught up in the storm, hastened for shelter to Verona where Godoy joined them. The Tudo family fled to Pisa.

On their return to Rome after Waterloo, they took up their quarters in the Barberini palace. The ex-sovereigns occupied the best floor and Manuel lived above them. Pepita, who had stayed, with her family, at Pisa, wrote Maria Luisa letters of a respectful tenderness. Thanks to the efforts of Vargas Laguna, the Barberini palace, which was no less large than uncomfortable – there was no fireplace in Maria Luisa's bedroom – became a nest of spies and a happy hunting-ground for informers.

The immediate concern was to cut short in Charles IV's mind any idea of returning to the throne; with that was linked the need to deprive Godoy of any opportunity of intriguing. The old King had already given solemn confirmation of his abdication at Aranjuez. But that was not enough for the peace of mind of Ferdinand VII who looked on a second retraction as always possible. He had to be accurately informed of every step taken, every word spoken and every thought conceived by the ex-sovereigns and their favourite. The palace was surrounded always by *sbirri* (papal police), all who went in were spied on, every letter that went out was intercepted, read and copied at the Spanish Embassy. The servants were suborned. Even in the intimate circle of the fallen monarchs, Vargas Laguna had his footing. Carmen Alvarez de Faria, Godoy's cousin, had the job of keeping an eye on Maria Luisa; the governess of the youthful Carlotta was paid to report on the doings and activities of her pupil's father; Don Ramon de San Martin, majordomo-mayor of Charles IV, was won over to Ferdinand VII with the award of a Golden Fleece and also sent in reports.

Not content with having spun these filaments, the Ambassador showed a diabolical skill in setting the inhabitants of the Barberini palace against each other. Tale-bearing, scandal-mongering, calumnies, promises, threats, letters anonymous and even forged – all were brought into play; it was a miracle that at the end of it there had been no bloodshed.

On top of all that, there were, naturally, questions of money. With Napoleon fallen, the annuity due to the ex-Sovereigns of Spain had ceased to be paid and their little Court was in want – a want which, let it be said in passing, makes short work of the assertions that Godoy had, in the days of his power, salted away millions abroad. Charles IV applied to his 'cousin' Louis XVIII who had him sent bills of exchange for one hundred and fifty thousand francs. This was chicken feed. Next, application was made to a Roman banker, the Prince Torlonia, who made some advances but demanded their repayment soon after. How to satisfy this hungry creditor? Here was Vargas Laguna's chance to get a hold on the old King. Without Manuel's knowledge,

he intervened. Charles wrote to his son and, in the end, the latter agreed to pay off Torlonia.

Ferdinand reckoned on reimbursing himself out of the jewels which Charles and Maria Luisa had taken out of Spain: these, if the voice of the people could be believed, were worth forty to fifty thousand gold francs. This treasure had already haunted Murat's mind, and later Napoleon's; indeed, before the fallen Sovereigns had left Marseilles, Fouché's police had in vain sought to confiscate it. It stayed out of their clutches. What it was most sought to lay hands on was a certain pearl, incomparable in both size and orient; this, it was said, had been given by the Queen to Manuel, who had passed it on to Pepita Tudo. But it, like the rest of the jewels, was not found again. Vargas Laguna tried to get hold of Maria Luisa's personal jewellery. Before Charles's absolute refusal, however, ('I have no mind to be the Queen's executioner!'), he had to desist and content himself with an 'inventory' which was, no doubt, largely bogus. The truth is that the worth of the precious stones taken from Spain had certainly been much exaggerated. The ex-Sovereigns, who had so many people sponging on them, were not very rich, and Manuel, nearly the whole of whose fortune seems to have stayed in Spain, was poorer still. He had given to Pepita Tudo the little he had salvaged. The question of providing for his old age caused him some anxiety – and would through successive disappointments continue to do so to the end – and he obtained from Maria Luisa a will making him her residuary legatee.

What between the slanders of Vargas Laguna's agents and the money troubles, the relations between Godoy and his old master passed from uneasiness to tension. For the first time for nearly thirty years a crack showed itself in the 'Trinity'.

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Manuel was perfectly aware of it; to him life at the Barberini Palace seemed drabber and drabber and he planned the construction of an existence somewhere else. To dissolve his marriage with the Princess of Bourbon, marry Pepita Tudo, go to Austria and settle down there: in 1817 these objectives occupied his entire attention.

Strangely enough, Maria Luisa did not seem opposed to these plans. She who, years ago, had married her niece to her favourite to remove the latter from the influence of other women, was now ready to favour the rupture of that marriage and to acquiesce in her rival, the mistress, becoming the lawful wife. Her feeling for Manuel was certainly now no more than that of an affectionate mother. She pressed the Pope to annul the marriage that had been celebrated in 1797. But the Ambassador of Ferdinand VII worked against her, the Curia dared not defy him and Godoy stayed tied to the wife who never wanted to see him more.

The plan for settling down in Austria similarly came to nothing. Pepita Tudo had met Metternich at the baths of Lucca and had won him to Manuel's cause. But here too Vargas Laguna intervened; he sent Charles IV a letter opposing Godoy's going, Ferdinand imposed his veto and the Court of Vienna yielded.

So here was Godoy tied to his old masters' destiny until their deaths. Being unable to re-make his own life, he passed the time in organising the lives of the young people around him.

He thought for a moment of marrying Francisco de Paula to Carlotta, the little Duchess of Sueca – a circumstance, be it noted, tending to invalidate the common belief that Francisco de Paula was his son; if he had been, would Manuel, for all his lack of morals, have gone to the length of joining in wedlock a half-brother and a half-sister? Anyhow the project came to nothing and, in July 1818, the Infante was affianced to his niece, the Princess Luisa of the Two Sicilies. (As for Carlotta, Vargas Laguna's cunning brought to nothing every plan of marriage that was made for her and only in 1820 did she marry Count Camille Ruspoli).

If Godoy was weary of Rome, Charles IV was hardly less so. Using the marriage of Francesco de Paula as an excuse and for all his rheumatic aches, he parted from his wife for the first time and went off alone to Naples to visit his brother, King Ferdinand IV, who had been restored to the throne in 1815 and was grandfather of the bride. Maria Luisa stayed at Roma in company with Godoy, who had just been deeply distressed by the death at Pisa of the younger of the sons he had had by Pepita. Gloom

reigned at the Barberini Palace and the poor Queen wrote on 28th October 1818: 'Everything seems so solitary, so silent, so melancholy, that it might be the antechamber to death.'

Charles, meanwhile, had arrived at Naples, his birthplace, though he had left it when he was eleven and had never been there since. His brother, the long-nosed king – *Nasone* – had by now lost his first wife, the formidable Maria Carolina, but had remarried an attractive brunette, the Duchess of Florida, whose morals were about on a par with those of her predecessor. The couple welcomed the ex-King of Spain with open arms, and he, on this heady soil, amid this easily pleased people, and buried in banquets, receptions, illuminations, performances at the Teatro San Carlo and visits to the ruins of Pompeii, discovered that life could be very agreeable without either Maria Luisa or Manuel.

He regretted having, after several weeks, to make the return journey to Rome, stopping en route at the property which he had acquired at Albano. Not long after, Ferdinand IV paid him a return visit at Rome, arriving on 24th October 1819; the Holy Father gave some splendid entertainments in honour of the two brothers.

Charles IV had taken such a fancy to Naples – or perhaps such a dislike to the Barberini Palace and its inmates – that, when Ferdinand got ready to go home, he decided to accompany him. The two Kings travelled together and the King of the Two Sicilies, who had, perhaps, been goaded thereto by Vargas Laguna, took advantage of the journey to open his brother's eyes to the relations between Maria Luisa and Godoy.

It is hardly likely that Charles had not suspected these for a long time. But respect for his beloved 'tranquillity' had so far prevented him from plumbing them at all deeply. Now that distance had woken him from the sort of trance in which his wife and her favourite had kept him, he grew angry, used violent language about them and showed less and less intention of ever going back to them.

Meanwhile Maria Luisa was suffering terribly from the cold prevailing in the Barberini Palace whose ill-fitting windows were but poor protection against the north wind. Seized with a con-

gestion of the lungs, she had to take to her bed. She got rapidly worse and soon her condition was desperate. On 2nd January Godoy wrote to Pepita: 'Her Majesty is in grave danger. She never stops coughing and expectorates less and less and with more and more difficulty. Her age and weakness make us all feel anxious. She is to receive today the last sacraments. I hope that His Majesty the King will be here in two days' time.' And, a few hours later, he added this postscript: 'I have paid the debts of friendship. Her Majesty has confessed and made her peace with our Redeemer.'

At a quarter past ten on the evening of the same day, Maria Luisa's passionate soul, now serene and purified, parted from the soiled body which had been so long her folly. Her husband was not present and doubtless she regretted his absence, but she had at least been able, up till the last moment, to rest her eyes on her lover, her son, her hero, on the incomparable Manuel.

Sincerely prostrated, the latter fell ill in his turn and found himself at death's door. Five days after the passing of his old friend, he wrote to Pepita: 'All my thoughts are centered on the precepts of our holy religion and I think only of my soul which will soon appear before the Creator. I know that I have much to answer for; but never have I neglected my duties to the people who depended on me.'

But at fifty-one he was still a good life and soon got well again, though not soon enough to be present at Maria Luisa's magnificent funeral in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, with twenty-one cardinals taking part in the ceremony.

As to Charles, the news of his wife's death, when he received it at Naples, was a bitter grief – less bitter, however, than it would have been earlier. His doctors implored him not to undertake the tiring journey to Rome and he obeyed them. On 7th January he wrote to Godoy: 'Friend Manuel. You cannot imagine how much I have felt the terrible blow of the loss of my beloved wife after fifty years of happy marriage. I have been quite overwhelmed, but now, I thank God, feel much better. I have no doubt that, during her illness, you tended her with all the devotion possible. Now that the Queen is no more, it is inconvenient

for me to have Carlotta living in my house. I grant her a pension of one thousand douros a month; take her to live with you at some distance off and I shall be obliged if you will do it before my return to Rome. That will not prevent you from coming to see me as often as you want. I remain, as always, the same. — Charles.'

In actual fact this man of habits did not survive by more than a few days this breach with his most cherished habit. Ties as strong and old as this one was cannot be broken with impunity. On 14th January, while he was getting ready to leave Naples, he was stricken with a violent fit of fever complicated by a severe attack of gout; he went to bed and soon seemed in a dying condition. Ferdinand IV, who was out hunting some way off, was notified in haste. He merely answered: 'Either my brother will die, or he will get well. If he dies, what can it matter to him whether I give up my hunting or not? If he gets well, he who is so good a sportsman himself will be delighted to see me return with a good bag of game to cheer his convalescence.'

When the worthy monarch at length got himself to open the latest despatches which poured in on him one after the other, he learnt that on 19th January his brother had piously breathed his last sigh at the age of just over seventy.

On hearing of the deaths of both his parents, Ferdinand VII gave orders that their mortal remains should be brought to Spain on a warship, for laying up at the Escorial. He did not forget to mention that all the jewels, all the plate, all the watches, all the armour, all the pictures, furniture, books and papers which were in the possession of their defunct Majesties, should be repatriated at the same time. His hatred had not mellowed; he was determined that nothing that had been theirs should go, Maria Luisa's will notwithstanding, to Manuel Godoy.

Within the space of seventeen days the latter had lost the two beings to whom he owed all and who, though they had often been his puppets, had, none the less, never ceased to be, in a certain aspect, his masters. The 'Earthly Trinity' was now no more and the only survivor of the three would henceforth be only a vain shadow and a walking corpse.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *The living corpse*

THE ROME OF 1819 was an ill-kempt, evil-smelling place, where the murmur of many fountains hummed against a background of clerical intrigues and plebeian good humour. Cardinals of the old school were to be found there who, in the manner of the preceding century, kept mistresses, while others, more numerous, had been embittered by exile and dreamed of a theocracy. The English milords, so long confined within their own island by the continental blockade, unfurled their presence once more to the rattle and crash of carriages. Easels of artists were as ubiquitous as excavations of antiquity. The *carbonari*, eluding the vigilance of the police, conspired mysteriously. High-born ladies had sorbets brought to their carriages in the cool shades of the Pincio, and talked of politics or love. Mysticism, liberalism, melancholy, follies – these were the fashion: one was, in short, romantic.

Yet, notwithstanding Stendhal, what an insipid thing this romanticism seems beside the passion seething in Spain! There, blood really did flow and conspiracy was something more than intrigue. Godoy, whom the presence of Pepita and his remaining son by her was not enough to cheer now that Maria Luisa was no more, caught the sound of this distant surge. Ferdinand VII, his sworn enemy, had reverted in type to the predecessors of his Bourbon ancestors – to the despotism, without the greatness, of Philip II. The Inquisition was re-established. The Jesuits returned. The dungeons were full. The shots of the firing-parties rang out. The liberals, whose ardour had animated the Cortes extraordinary of Cadiz, were hunted down as ruthlessly as ever had been the partisans of the 'intruder king'. The fanaticism which always lurks in Spanish hearts and had received from the war against Napoleon the impress of sanctity was in full spate. In every town and in every village, nothing but acts of violence, reprisals, denunciations, simmering hatreds, unrecorded out-

breaks. The army, finding its pay much in arrear, mutinied and demanded it. The officers' cliques were on the boil. The American colonies, which, by refusing to recognise Joseph as King, had got into the way of ruling themselves, now refused to place their neck again beneath the yoke of the metropolis. With English encouragement, the regions of the Plata had driven out their viceroy and Buenos-Aires was about to proclaim the new Republic. San Martin had crossed the Andes and, by his victory at Maïpu, had brought to an end Spanish rule in Chile. A Chilean army, carried by Lord Cochrane's fleet, occupied Peru. In New Granada there was insurrection which, thanks to Bolivar, succeeded. A priest, Hidalgo by name, had, in Mexico, raised the half-breeds and the Indians; though he was beaten and shot, the ruling idea of General Iturbide, who had commanded the loyalist army, was to have himself proclaimed Emperor. It was in vain that the Madrid government ordered ever more executions, armed the natives against the creoles, sought the aid first of the British cabinet and then of the Court of Russia; the insurgents, who would in the beginning have been content with a constitution, now claimed independence. Soon they would get it and only a few remaining strips of the Crown of Spain's overseas possessions would own the sway of Ferdinand VII. It was a long fight, complicated by local and racial rivalries and surreptitiously fomented by Great Britain; already, however, Spanish sovereignty stood condemned. In Spain itself, the educated classes were disturbed by what was happening, but the popular masses, who thrilled to quite other appeals, hardly bothered about it.

Did Manuel Godoy bother about it, the man who had at one time dreamed of weaning his country from obscurantism, and slackening, with a view to easing, the bonds uniting the colonies to the mother country? There is no saying. He had at that time much on his mind.

Money first of all. His vast possessions in Spain still remained confiscated; under pressure from Ferdinand's agents at Rome, he had had to renounce the legacy of her fortune which Maria Luisa had made him – a legacy which, in addition, Charles IV

had disapproved; he had not even a share in the pensions provided posthumously by the late King for his companions in exile. Family troubles next. His lawful wife, the Princess of Bourbon, still lay snug at Toledo with her brother, the Cardinal-Archbishop, and steadily refused any rapprochement; his daughter by her, Carlotta, later to marry Camille Ruspoli to whom she brought the title of Duke of Sueca, evinced as regards her father a growing coldness. Then, injured vanity. All had forgotten him and all his old friends made a point of not knowing him, Lucien Bonaparte, the dear Lucien of former days, who lived near Rome, even refusing to see him: and now the Spanish Ambassador to the Vatican had been pressing it to forbid him calling himself the Prince of the Peace – that splendid title which once upon a time the whole of Europe had pronounced with deference. At one moment he meditated accepting the invitation sent him by Charles Fox's nephew, Lord Holland – one of the few friends who had remained faithful – and withdrawing to London. But England was far away from all he cared for. Provisionally, he stayed at Rome, down-at-heels and idle, only too happy when some tourist of distinction did him the honour of visiting him.

In 1820, one satisfaction at any rate came his way. Instigated by Colonel Riego, the garrison of Cadiz declared against Ferdinand VII; soon the insurrection had spread to a large part of the peninsula, and to save his throne Ferdinand was forced to yield and swear fealty to a liberal Constitution. The bright interval was a short one: the new Ministers did not think of bringing Manuel home or of returning to him anything that was his. Nor did the interlude prove lasting: in the North of the Peninsula the reactionary party known as the 'apostolics' stirred up civil war against the constitutional party; supporting the former was the Holy Alliance; in 1823, a French army, commissioned by the Congress of Verona and commanded by the Duke of Angoulême, entered Spain and put Ferdinand back in the plenitude of his absolutism. Riego was executed. The Spanish mob now acclaimed the French – the very people whom it had stabbed in the back ten years before – and only objected to them when they tried to check the savagery of the reprisals wreaked by the

partisans of the restored King.

That King was now, perhaps, the only man left in Europe who still took an interest in the fallen favourite. Now, as ever, he pursued him with his hate and his Ambassador bombarded the Roman Curia with complaints about him. The substance of them was still his title of Prince of the Peace. It looked as if Ferdinand wanted to rob even of his name the man to whom, at the time of the conspiracy of the Escorial, he had had to make so abject a submission.

In 1821, Napoleon died. 'C'est une nouvelle,' said Talleyrand, 'ce n'est plus un événement.' To Godoy in his present state could there be any real events? Life dragged on at the Mattei Palace where the Tuda often came to visit her lover along with her son, now just turning twenty and soon to marry an English girl, Miss Mary Crowe. Manuel was now a man of sixty, but his health was still good and his faculties were unimpaired; he felt full of life and his isolation weighed on him more and more.

In 1828, he learned that a man was no more whose name recalled memories of happier days: Goya had died at Bordeaux at the age of eighty-two.

On Ferdinand VII's restoration fourteen years before, the painter, who was unpopular for having had intelligence with the French, feared for a time for his life. But Ferdinand showed leniency for once and, after telling him that he deserved strangling, confirmed him in his offices. And Goya, whose brushes meant much more to him than his opinions, set about executing conscientiously portraits of the King and of the leading people at the Court. In honour of the insurgents of the 2nd May 1808, he painted also two avenging canvases. By way of relaxation, he lovingly bathed in light the forms of the 'Young Women' – the picture is now in the Museum at Lille. His weird dreams haunting him anew, he painted his sinister 'Old Women' and the yet more sinister 'Garrotted', and covered the walls of his house with hallucinating visions. His manner had now grown simpler, ampler and more sublimated; pathos was in some masterpieces of this period, such as the 'Garden of Olive Trees' and the 'Communion of San José de Calasanz', and on his palette more than whites and

blacks were hardly to be found.

But the Madrid in which, since 1823, the 'apostolics' had established a reign of clerical terror stifled him, and in 1824 he got permission to visit France on the excuse of going to take the waters. He settled down at Bordeaux, continuing to paint pictures of pure delight, such as the 'Milkmaid', and trying out, though now nearly eighty, a new technique: lithography. In four admirable plates, he evoked the memory of the bull-fights which had delighted his youth. In 1826, he put in a brief appearance at Madrid, but soon came back to Bordeaux, which he liked. There it was that, two years later, he yielded up his fiery soul: almost to the last a brush was in his hand. With him a Spain died: the Spain of Goya, which was also Godoy's.

In that same year, 1828, a piece of good news reached, at last, Godoy: the death of his lawful wife. Pepita and he lost no time. They got married with the Church's blessing, thus regularising at long last a situation which had caused endless scandal and killing with the same stone the charge of bigamy which public opinion had levelled in former days against the new bridegroom. The Tundo, no doubt, not being a disinterested party, reckoned privately that being the mistress of the master of Spain and the Indies was better than being the wife of an outlaw.

More of an outlaw now than ever: Ferdinand's wrath did not abate and Pepita would not keep for long the right to have herself called Princess of the Peace. In 1830, Godoy had been squeezed, badgered and threatened to the point at which he agreed to give up his title and leave in the hands of the Pope the patent for it signed by Charles IV. The only compensation which the Holy See allowed was the elevation into a principality of the estate of Bassano, near Sutri, which the ex-favourite had just bought for seventy thousand piastres. So passed the Prince of the Peace of world-wide fame: in his place vegetated unknown the Prince of Bassano.

This was a step-down which seems to have affected Godoy deeply. Roman society looked down its nose at his new wife; the revolutionary stirrings which troubled Italy in 1830 alarmed him; the reaction which followed them alarmed him still more;

he now loathed living in Rome where Ferdinand's agents gave him no peace. So, after turning into cash the few possessions he still had, he decided to leave for Paris – the capital in which so many Spanish exiles had already settled, where long ago he had wished to meet Napoleon face to face and where now Louis Philippe, the citizen-king, must, he thought, give him safe asylum.

★ ★ ★

So, in 1832, Godoy, after taking his leave of the Pope in a final audience, turned the key in the door of the Mattei Palace and settled down in Paris, along with Pepita, in rooms in *no. 59b* Boulevard Beaumarchais.

It was the Paris of Balzac, still badly lit and badly planned, picturesque, bubbling with new ideas and with a penchant for barricades. The old couple found themselves rather isolated. Manuel had but few French contacts, and the many Spanish refugees, for all their hatred of Ferdinand VII, had no liking for the ex-favourite who stood in their eyes for an outworn stock of political ideas.

Pepita, however, did her best to open a salon. A few foreign diplomats of the second rank turned up there, and Apponyi, the Austrian Ambassador, though keeping away himself, did not scorn it for intelligence purposes. Nothing could prevent it from being a very bleak salon, or life in penury from being bleaker still. Pepita, who longed regretfully for sunny Andalusia, soon wearied of it all. Her carelessness and extravagance brought debts in their train and these debts ruptured the harmony between herself and Manuel. In the end, she could hardly stand the sight of this man of nearly seventy whose companion she had been for nearly forty years. It seemed, oddly enough, as if between herself and him Maria Luisa had been an essential link; with this link gone, they came apart. On some excuse or other Pepita left for Madrid: she never returned from it. As Manuel had transferred into her name all his remaining possessions outside Spain, she had enough to live quite comfortably, but, aided therein first by her son and then by her grandson, never stopped running into debt. She died, forgotten, in 1869.

While this desertion was still being hatched, an event occurred which filled Godoy with hope: in September 1833, Ferdinand VII, his personal enemy, died. Before doing so, he had, in circumstances never quite explained, declared the salic law to be abrogated in Spain and thereby left his throne to Isabella, the elder of the two daughters whom he had had by his fourth wife, Maria Christina of Naples, who was proclaimed Regent. This Maria Christina was herself the daughter of the Infanta Maria Isabella, who generally passed for being the fruit of the adulterous loves of Queen Maria Luisa and Godoy. ('This epileptic bastard', as her mother-in-law, Maria Carolina of Naples had once amiably called her). Manuel could now hope for a return of good fortune, and he made constant application to Madrid for permission to return to Spain, or, at least, to have restored to him such part of his fortune as had not yet been disposed of elsewhere.

But Maria Christina, though inheriting from her grandmother a passionate nature, seemed not much concerned for her probable grandfather. In any case she had her hands full with the insurrection of the party which declined to recognise the abrogation of the salic law and recognised as King of Spain only Don Carlos, the late King's brother. Behind this question of succession lay the struggle between traditionalists and liberals, as well as the opposition of those favouring a centralised régime to the champions of the provincial privileges. In a short time the Carlist war flared up. Once more, on the bitter soil of Spain, hatreds glowered and blood flowed. In the midst of an outburst of this kind there was no room for old and indolent Manuel. His prayers fell on stony ground.

He was now in penury and unable to pay, not only the debts left behind by Pepita, but even the rent of his humble lodging. Despairing of Spain, he applied to Louis Philippe, whose mother had once found asylum in Spain. The French King still remembered the time when he and his family roamed the earth as outlaws. He knew that the Prince of the Peace, then at the summit of his power, had often shown kindness towards the French émigrés, and he granted the ex-master of Spain and the Indies an allowance of five thousand francs a year. Only, for he was of a

thrifty turn of mind, the allowance was charged not on the Civil List but on the secret funds of the Foreign Affairs department.

So it came about that the man whose wealth had, in popular estimation, once exceeded the fabulous riches of the Indies, was henceforward sure of having five thousand francs a year to stand between himself and starvation.

Godoy made use of these comparatively calm waters in an attempt to justify himself in the eyes of both his contemporaries and posterity, and he aimed at supplementing his allowance by means of this justification.

He had known for some time a retired French Officer, Colonel d'Esménard, who had fought in Spain and retained some contacts there. With him as collaborator he decided to write his memoirs and publish them first at Paris. In 1836 and 1837 they appeared in four volumes, Esménard's part being ostensibly only that of translator. Did he in fact do more and write parts of the book? There is no saying for certain. The often emphatic and always slovenly style, the complacency, the prolixity and the disingenuousness which come and go in the pages – all these things bear the mark of Manuel. Anyhow, this piece of self-apology failed of its purpose. The untrue statements in it were too blatant to deceive and exposing them was the merest child's play.

What is this? Manuel getting into power thanks only to the gifts of statesmanship which were discerned in him, Manuel the consistent liberal and very nearly the democrat, Manuel the invariably disinterested who had never considered his personal interest, Manuel falling only as a result of the intrigues of the enemies of his country: who is going to believe it? 'Qui veut trop prouver ne prouve rien' and the *Memoirs* of the Prince of the Peace will never be anything but one of the most unreliable sources for his life-story. Contemporaries made no mistake on that point and the four volumes were not even a commercial success. Re-translated into Spanish, they were published at Madrid, where the only feeling they excited was one of curiosity.

Manuel had succeeded in getting himself talked about for a short time, but he was none the richer for the venture; the despatches of the Spanish Ambassador at Paris – Campuzano first

and then Olozaga – told in pitiless terms of the increasing penury in which the once all-powerful favourite was now floundering.

Very soon, however, men ceased once more to talk about him. We may see him in imagination, still youthful in spirit and still full of life, trailing his *Memoirs* round a Paris which was rapidly changing and where he could now seem little more than an unintelligible fossil.

He now lived in 6 Rue Neuve des Mathurins (the street disappeared later). In the central parts of Paris, which he hardly ever left, his was a familiar figure, with his frock-coat tightly buttoned around his portly form, his whiskers, whose brown had now turned white, fluttering in the wind, his face all wrinkled but lit up by a glance which was as penetrating and youthful as ever. He took a walk every day either to the Palais Royal or to the Tuileries. The habitués of those two places called him by a Christian name: Monsieur Manuel, and all agreed, on seeing him below the Montpensier gallery or near the terrace at the water's edge, that he was an old lover of the theatre or, perhaps, a retired actor. His French was still an uncertain quantity and his Spanish was no longer pure: he spoke it with an Italian accent picked up during his long stay at Rome. He was in a way denationalised, almost depersonalised. Yet, with it all, affable, gay, kindly and loved by the children whom he liked to get to play games. When, by mistake, a little boy trundled a hoop into the legs of the man whose renown would, according to Maria Luisa, 'end only with the world', he picked up the hoop and returned it to the child with a jolly smile and a friendly tap on the cheek. 'Thank you, Monsieur Manuel!' holla'd the urchin, as he scampered off.

Beneath this good nature lay all the same a certain bitterness. Godoy felt that he had not deserved, not so much his disgrace, as his abandonment. And this bitterness, though tempered by an unbeatable optimism, came out when, on 19th September 1838, he went to see his faithful English friend, Lord Holland, then on his way through Paris.

'The Prince of the Peace', Lord Holland wrote in his *Reminiscences*, 'has much changed to outward view but still keeps the

same expression. Good-humoured, self-satisfied, jovial and cordial, he complained much, in his bad French and throaty voice and with an angry look in his eyes, of the world's ingratitude and, rather unreasonably, included the French government among his grievances, even though his sole means of support comes from it in the shape of an allowance which, though small, at any rate keeps him alive: five thousand francs a year. But he cannot help comparing it with the sums allowed by himself to the Princess and other French émigrés who took refuge in Spain.

'He was especially bitter about the Tудо, to whom, he said, he had been attached from youth and had sacrificed everything, even to the point of being accused on her account (a ridiculous charge he called it, I think) of bigamy, and whom he had married, as everyone knows, after the death of his first wife, to legitimise his son. To her he had transferred everything he had outside Spain, and she had abandoned him, keeping everything herself; the result was that he now found himself plunged in the greatest misery imaginable and had to live on only the small allowance granted him by Louis Philippe.'

The conversation then shifted to Godoy's *Memoirs* and he admitted that the great delicacy he had exercised in writing them had lowered public interest and injured their sale. Lord Holland then broached the subject of the conspiracy of the Escorial, but on this Godoy was reluctant to talk. He said but little against Napoleon, though he claimed always to have acted in opposition to him rather than otherwise, and even seemed indisposed to blacken the character of Ferdinand VII.

'I found him,' continued Lord Holland, 'less depressed and more natural and free in his conversation than I had expected. I asked him if he had seen Don Francisco de Paula; the way in which he answered me 'No!' convinced me that this prince, who is notoriously his son, has made no advances to him. He explained to me, speaking with much seriousness, why it was impossible for him to seek his protection.'

Not long after the old exile had gone, Lord Holland found, just at the foot of the staircase of the house where he was staying, a chair in which was seated a lady of imposing aspect and swarthy

skin, whom two or three servants were about to carry up to a higher floor. This half-helpless lady was, he was told, the Duchess of Sueca, Godoy's daughter by his first wife and to whom the Spanish government had handed over much of her father's confiscated property; 'but she does not give him a sou and has broken off all relations with him.'

So, then, whether it came from his first wife's side or his second wife's, Manuel always met with the same harshness and the same cruelty. His legitimate daughter, while getting the benefit of his fortune, ignored him on principle; the Tuda – 'that woman' as he wrote in speaking of her whom he had once adored – only remembered him for the purpose of asking him to settle the debts which she had left behind in Paris. As for the descendants of Maria Luisa – his too, no doubt – who were now on the throne, such as the Queen-Regent Maria Christina, or on the steps of the throne, such as the Infante Francisco de Paula, they seemed to have forgotten his very existence.

'A strange man,' concluded Lord Holland, 'and a strange destiny! His case seems fated "to point a moral or adorn a tale".'

Beneath the strokes of such incessant misfortune, Godoy's optimism, the reflection of his good health, ended by giving way. Even more than the penury which engulfed him, the contempt which encompassed the memory of his life and against which his *Memoirs* had made no headway, tore at his heart: 'My honour!' he exclaimed, 'I cannot forgive the crime of those who have robbed me of it. My honour! It belongs not only to me but to my ancestors. Endless meditation, perpetual solitude, sleeplessness and insufficient food – such is the destiny of the pitiable Manuel.'

In Spain, meanwhile, the first Carlist war had ended in the victory of the partisans of Isabella, whose majority had been proclaimed though she was still only thirteen years of age. Soon it was a question of finding a husband for her and another for her younger sister. This business of the 'Spanish marriages,' which trenched on wide international interests, agitated the European chancelleries for several years. The younger, in the end, married the Duke of Montpensier, son of Louis Philippe –

much to England's annoyance – and the young Queen Isabella was joined – yet another cousinly marriage – to Don Francisco de Assisi, son of the Infante Francisco de Paula. Isabella was in all probability the great grand-daughter of Godoy and there was strong presumption for thinking that Francisco de Assisi was his grandson.

All this gave the outlaw something to dream about. Though now a man of seventy-seven, he redoubled his efforts to have justice done to him at last. He secured the assistance of prominent advocates at Madrid and peppered them with memoranda in a handwriting that was still firm, regular and easily readable.

This indefatigable activity won itself in the end some attention from the new generation of Spaniards whose interest in the events of the beginning of the century was purely historical. One of them, Mesonero Romanos, a journalist of talent, went to Paris to visit the ex-favourite of Charles IV and Maria Luisa.

'Speaking in his Italian accent', wrote Romanos, 'he thanked me and reiterated several times that the wish of his heart was to return to Spain and take a walk in the Prado. He hoped much both from the justice of his cause and from the skill of his advocates, Perez Hernandez and Pacheco. I told him that, being a friend of these two eminent lawyers, I would ask them to redouble their efforts on his behalf and I promised him that whatever my feeble efforts could do would be done to get him satisfaction.'

Romanos kept his word and even induced Pepita Tudo, possibly against her will, to unite her efforts with his. Isabella's Ministers let their hearts be touched and a Royal Decree was published on 30th April 1844 returning to Manuel his sequestered property in Spain.

Was this to be the final end of penury? No. For on various pretexts opposition raised its head at once to any effective restitution. Cases were taken to the Courts and until their decision, which was given only long after Godoy's death and was anyhow unfavourable, his fortune stayed sequestered.

As some compensation, however, another decree of 31st May 1847 permitted Manuel to return to Spain and restored to him

his titles, offices and dignities. The only exceptions were the offices of generalissimo and grand-admiral, which had been formally abolished, and the style of Prince of the Peace – the reason given being that there could not be another prince in Spain besides the Prince of the Asturias, heir to the throne.

Godoy had, therefore, to rest content with recovering his rank of captain-general and getting back his title of Duke of Alcudia. He was given besides the Grand Cross of the newly created Order of Saint Hermenegilde. And – a more substantial boon – his daughter, the Duchess of Sueca, decided to make him an annual allowance of sixty thousand reals. (She had at that time two sons of twenty-five and nineteen respectively who did not know their grandfather; Adolphe, the elder, who died as late as 1914, founded a family of Spanish *grande*s; Luis, the younger, became the Marquess of Boadilla del Monte and later settled at Florence.)

For Manuel this was the end of grinding poverty. He had had to wait to be eighty before finding – as near as no matter – that ‘security’ which long ago he had fought for like a tiger in the shape of a Portuguese principality. Now that he had the right to do so, would he return to Spain to die? After some hesitation he decided to stay in Paris. The fatigue of the journey put him off, he guessed that in Madrid he would find himself a stranger, and habits had grown on him at Paris which, at his age, he would be loath to do without. Giving his health as a reason, he obtained permission, renewed every six months, to stay on in France.

He had by this time left the Rue Neuve des Mathurins and was living at 20 Rue de la Michodière in a then fashionable quarter. The house, which was built towards the end of the eighteenth century, still stands; though small in size, it has quite a good appearance with its band of carved stone running between the second and third floors and its little mansard windows on the fourth.

It was on this fourth floor, which he hardly ever left, that Godoy heard, in 1848, the echoes of the fall of King Louis Philippe, followed by the commotion of the revolutionary days of June, and then the election to the Presidency of the Republic

of the nephew of that Napoleon to whom he had been successively the rival, the accomplice and the puppet.

All that left him almost cold now. He was an old man, to whom the present was less actual than the past, and the visions filling his mind were doubtless of things long ago: childhood at Badajoz in the convent's shade and amid the perfume of the orange trees; the quarters of the bodyguards; his presentation to Maria Luisa and the beginnings of a possessive love; the obsequies of Charles III; the voluptuous and easy life at Madrid and Aranjuez among a bevy of adoring women; the admiration of men of letters and savants; the friendship with Goya; his friendly fellow-conspirator, Lucien Bonaparte; the honour and glory of the War of the Oranges. On the many intrigues, the many glimpsed splendours, the many disappointed hopes, his memory was now somewhat confused; it came to life again at the terrible memories of the riot at Aranjuez and the imprisonments at Pinto and Villaviciosa; after that, darkness again – or near-darkness.

Taken in all, a good life, and one whose only fault it had been to go on too long. But would posterity do justice to him? Manuel, though no grave infirmity yet afflicted him, felt a fatigue for which there was no remedy. His vitality, that wonderful vitality which had carried him through so many trials, had left him. His heart showed signs of weakness. He was going to die, he knew it, and the man who had given life to so many other beings was saddened by the thought that none of his descendants would receive his last sigh.

His real life ended in 1808, but only on 4th October 1851, in a foreign land, alone and forgotten, did this living shadow finally pass away.

Spain was then the prey to political convulsions which left her no leisure to summon up the past and no one went into mourning for the dead man. As for France, she was entirely taken up with the battle between the Prince-President and the Assembly which culminated in the *coup d'état* of 2nd December. Only the *Constitutionnel* and one or two other papers put on their second pages, without headline, this meagre notice: 'Don Manuel Godoy,

Prince of the Peace, former Minister of Charles IV, has just died at the age of eighty-five.'

*Sic transit* —

★ ★ ★

On 9th October a simple service was held in the parochial church of Saint Roch for the repose of the soul of 'Don Godoy, Duke of Alcudia, Prince of the Peace'. The absolution was given by the Abbé Desplas de Boyssorn, second curate. Only a few neighbours attended.

When it was over, the mortal remains of the former dictator of Spain and the Indies were disposed in the church's crypt. On 16th January 1852, they were taken out of it and transferred to the Père Lachaise cemetery. There they were buried in a tomb the site of which had been bought by Joseph de Tribarrena, 104, Rue de Richelieu.

This tomb is still visible, in the forty-fifth division, third line (called *L'Ilot des Espagnols*) of the cemetery. A rusty railing, to which has been affixed a long since yellowed coping of porcelain, surrounds a stone beneath a plane tree; at the head of the stone is a pointed stele surmounted by a cross. From this stele stands out a medallion representing the slightly flabby profile of Godoy, with his long nose, his receding chin and his hair and whiskers floating in the wind; beneath is this inscription:

DON MANUEL GODOY  
PRINCIPE DE LA PAZ  
DUQUE DE LA ALCUDIA  
NACIO EN BADAJOZ  
A 12 DE MAYO DE 1767  
FALLECIO EN PARIS  
A 4 DE OCTUBRE DE 1851

Though he died alone, today at least Godoy lies surrounded by three of his own. Buried there were, in 1880 his daughter-in-law Mary Crowe, widow of his remaining son by Pepita Tudo, and his grand-daughter, Maria Godoy, wife of Ricardo Scaver; then, in 1896, his grandson, Emmanuel Charles Godoy of Bassano. This last had had a troubled life; he had begun as attaché to the Spanish Embassy at Paris, but had then come

down in the world and had lived later with Rosina Stolz, the temperamental prima donna of the time; he died in want.

A neglected tomb, a medallion of poor quality carved by an anonymous hand, a steadily disappearing inscription which recalls a few titles; there, materially speaking, is all that remains of a man who was for sixteen years the absolute ruler of Spain and the Indies, whose fame rivalled for a moment that of Bonaparte, whom a queen adored and who had, it is likely, kings among his descendants. Say rather would be all, were there not, eclipsing these shadows, the canvases on which Goya – and in what colours! – has fixed for posterity the florid skin, the complacent smile, the crafty look, the languid pose, the broideries, the crosses and the ribbons of the Prince of the Peace at the summit of his fame.

## *Epilogue*

HOW EASILY the portrait of Manuel Godoy can be made a slick piece of chiaroscuro! Let us eschew all romanticism of the kind and consider the points at which this agreeable and impossible man left his mark on his time.

Nothing marked the full-blooded, attractive and half-educated boy as destined for anything exceptional in the way of a career. His father, had he not been three things, would never have dreamed of putting him into the bodyguard: first, a cock of his own dunghill, next, a worthy officer of militia with an eye for the girls, thirdly, a churchwarden of his parish.

A presentation to the wife of the heir to the throne proved the decisive moment of his life. His adult life began in an age when the favours of women could make the careers of men more easily than they do today; the same chance that came to him came in an earlier century to Churchill, later Duke of Marlborough, and in Godoy's own century to the Abbé de Périgord, the future Talleyrand. It was a chance he knew how to make the most of.

Yet it would be a mistake to see in him a knight of the alcove and nothing more. His career as a lover created scandal only because of his position which made every detail of it public property, but similar digressions in the case of others have passed almost unnoticed because it was easier to keep them dark. Had he been no more than a particularly virile seducer, he would, no doubt, have left no more mark on the world than an Ortiz or a Mallo or the many other handsome young men on whom the inflammable Maria Luisa deigned to look with favour.

But, in that Spanish Court in which the fierce, brooding spirit of the nation had been held down by two generations of hypochondriacal Bourbons, he seemed a sort of infant Bacchus, bursting with joie de vivre and self-confidence, full of exuberance and not without guile.

Maria Luisa's body was easy game, but her husband's mind

was harder to be had. A flick of the wrist, and Godoy had both.

He was a really agreeable and intelligent man. He was, above all, as different from the fossilised *hidalgos* as from all the odd *petimetres* who surrounded the sovereigns. With him a breath of fresh air and a breath of country air ruffled the salons of the New Palace at Madrid, the icy corridors of the Escorial and the plane-trees of Aranjuez. His very insolence had a tonic effect there.

When he first became a minister, he was, it is true, ignorant to the point of writing *Iles asiatiques* instead of *Villes hanséatiques* and of confusing Prussia and Russia, but he had at least a power of application, a good will, a slickness and an ease which enabled him to cover up his deficiencies. Lord Holland, who was no bad judge where public men were concerned, wrote of him: 'He seemed born for high position.'

Unfortunately, greatness quickly turned a head which was none too hard; the charming young man changed his skin and became a fop. Sensitive enough to feel the direction of the wind, he lacked the energy to catch it and make it turn his mill. Coming to power just when the revolutionary tempest was starting to shake Europe to its foundations, he could neither make a revolution in Spain on the one hand nor, on the other, by anchoring himself solidly on Spanish traditions, nip revolution in the bud. He prided himself on his liberal outlook, but, notwithstanding the statements of quite a number of contemporary historians, it may be asked whether this liberalism of his was not pure opportunism or denoted more than his grudge against the *Grandeess*, who refused to call him by the familiar 'tu', and against the Inquisition, which accused him of bigamy. He fostered the sciences and the arts; but was his encouragement a sign of anything other than a wish to form a little court of savants and artists where he could afford himself the luxury of despising the rather mollusc-like aristocracy and bureaucracy which had formed till then the framework of the realm?

Had his work been done in an eighteenth century German principality he would have bequeathed the memory of an enlightened and provident statesman. But, as the ruler of a large State and a contemporary of Napoleon's, his quite real talents

were bound in the end to seem utterly inadequate.

And the more inadequate, in that the empire which he ruled had now only a facade of strength and was, by its very extent, peculiarly vulnerable. Manuel, at first, realised this fact, and it was only with reluctance that he accepted the challenge of the war declared by the Convention on Spain – into which the latter hurled herself with a high-minded frenzy. He liked, admittedly, to play the soldier and parade in some resplendent uniform before the troops; but, at heart, he was at once too indolent and too aware of his country's weakness to be really warlike. And the title of Prince of the Peace, which was awarded him after he had concluded the Treaty of Bâle, reflected well his true nature.

Why did he ever go beyond the terms of that treaty in his subsequent dealings with the Republic, and why did he transform it into an alliance which, though there were reserves in his management of it, was bound in the end to drag him, and his country with him, into the depths? Here, perhaps, he is blameworthy. But was neutrality a possible thing between an exuberant, threatening France, going from one victory to the next, and a faraway England, little disposed to come to Spain's assistance and seemingly most concerned, as many thought, to profit by Spain's difficulties to win herself markets in America?

Of the two evils, Godoy chose the one which he deemed the lesser and allied himself with Spain's formidable neighbour. Metternich, a cleverer man, had to do just the same thing a little later. Only, for a country like Spain, whose only contact with Europe was by way of France, the double game was harder to play than for a Central-European country like Austria. When Manuel tried to beat a retreat and shake off the yoke of the Republic's arrogant ambassadors, the Directory broke him. With 18th Brumaire come, the Sovereigns' affection for him brought him back to power and he then fancied himself as a poker player against the Bonapartes. Lucien was child's play, but Napoleon proved too strong for him and in no long time the younger son from Badajoz was only a plaything in the hands of the implacable Corsican.

The policy of Napoleon in regard to Spain was a weird and wonderful mixture of harshness, contempt and incomprehension. First of all, he required an army of her and went into a passion when Godoy brought the 'war of the oranges' to a premature end; next, he wanted money, and the 'subventions' treaty was the result; then, the order came for ships, which his admiral led out to the disaster of Trafalgar; at a later date fresh demands for both money and men followed. The mills of Spanish government ground slowly. Asking of it so many different things was, in the end, to bring it to a standstill. Nor in all this was there, it seemed, the smallest consideration for the interests of the monarchy of which such heavy sacrifices were asked. The peace of Amiens was negotiated with England without the opinion of the ally at Madrid being so much as taken; notwithstanding the terms of the agreement with Spain, Louisiana was handed over to the United States, and, though the annexation of Portugal was dangled before Spanish eyes, performance was governed by narrowly egoistical afterthoughts.

In all this there was quite enough to make a cleverer and more energetic man than Manuel lose his footing. It was his misfortune to find himself drawn into a whirlpool. And his task was further complicated, both by the tendency of his Sovereigns to sacrifice virtually anything to the satisfaction of seeing one of their daughters seated on an Italian throne and by the hatred felt for him by the heir to the throne.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the part played in Godoy's career by his fear of the future King of Spain. It was this fear which caused him too often to forget the interests committed to his charge in his efforts to secure at any price security for himself in the event of Charles IV's death. Hence the idea of having the Prince disinherited and himself made regent; hence, too, that of acquiring for himself, if all else failed, an independent principality. Izquierdo's lengthy mission to Paris – a mission conducted under the nose of the King of Spain's official Embassy – betrayed this agonising fear, and on that fear Napoleon, inspired by Talleyrand, played like a master.

The Prince of the Peace had, however, sensibility enough to

find galling the chains which held him fast. He thought, just for a moment, that he could break them; it was the time of the indiscreet manifesto which he published in 1806. The battle of Jena returned him to them. These chains he cordially disliked, and it was with a feeling of disquiet that he accepted that Treaty of Fontainebleau which, if it promised him the Portuguese principality so long desired, authorised France to send her armies into Spain. However, a sudden hope dawned: an indiscretion committed by the Prince of the Asturias – an indiscretion which he worked his hardest to misrepresent as a conspiracy – would perhaps enable him to rid himself of this crooked enemy. The hope died: Napoleon's Ambassador had been mixed up in the affair, which had in consequence, on orders from Paris, to be suppressed as to half of it.

It was now the débâcle. Manuel thought of escaping, with his Sovereigns in his train, to that America where, not unassisted by the English, rumblings of discontent could already be heard. Too late. The army corps of Murat were descending already on Madrid, to the applause of a Spanish people who conceived their purpose to be that of ridding them of a master whom his insolence, libertinage, avarice, neglect of religion and too long term of favour had rendered odious. Godoy was now the focal point of the Spanish passion which had been so long kept under. That passion blazed and its unhappy victim came tumbling down. Then were the terrible days of Aranjuez, the abject terror of the fallen favourite, the frightful humiliation which he underwent of seeing his life saved by the hated Ferdinand, his imprisonment, his escape to France under the protection of Murat's cavalry, his part in the dynasty's fall, the final exile, the increasing loneliness, and lastly, worse than death, oblivion.

Had a man of stronger calibre been in Godoy's place, would he have done much better than Godoy did? Call it, if you like, possible, even probable: it is still unproven.

The Spanish monarchy, at the time that the favourite of Maria Luisa and Charles IV was called in to govern it, was like some vast building with a still imposing facade, while all was ruinous behind. The inhabitants of metropolitan Spain numbered no

more than ten millions; while between her and her enormous empire overseas movement had slowed down and the bonds had slackened. It would have needed several decades of peace and tranquillity to complete the good work of the first Bourbon kings and restore some vigour to this huge, unhealthy body. But it was Manuel's misfortune to come to power just at a time when the French Revolution was disallowing anybody's claim to be exempt from its repercussions.

To stay neutral was a chimera. Even supposing that France would have respected neutrality, Great Britain would not have, and would have profited by the course of events to put in execution her plans, formed long ago, in regard to the Spanish colonies. The affair of the seizure of the frigates on 5th October 1804, in a time of complete peace, shows how little regard the British Cabinet could pay, at need, to the rules of international law.

An alliance with France of a more sincere and continuously active kind would doubtless have hastened the secession of those very colonies, would have ruined metropolitan Spain and would not really have assured her security; at the summit of his power and pride, Napoleon, as he said himself, would not have tolerated indefinitely a Bourbon on the throne of Charles V.

Might not Godoy, then, have ranged himself resolutely in the British camp? But only at a much later date was England prepared to give effective help to continental allies, and the only result of joining her side earlier would have been to precipitate the occupation of the peninsula by French troops at a time when circumstances would have been less favourable for a war of independence than they were in 1808.

One possibility remained, and one which Godoy was contemplating on the eve of the outbreak at Aranjuez: the departure of the Royal Family and Court to America, where the Spanish government might have maintained its independence, leaving it to events in Europe to bring about the fall of Napoleon and the liberation of the enslaved peoples. That would have been, perhaps, the best course, and a more energetic man than the Prince of the Peace might have taken more effective steps to realise it.

The point at which Godoy is most open to criticism is, not his tactical blunders, but his misunderstanding of the Spanish character. An opportunist, a sceptic and an egoist, he did not try to comprehend the intransigent, instinctual and generous people at whose head an extraordinary destiny had set him.

Now, divorce between public feeling and the conduct of rulers is, when it goes on for long, a calamity which the downfall of the rulers is not enough to repair. The slim sort of indolence with which the Prince of the Peace ruled a fiery nation is partly the cause of the convulsions which, in later years, shook Spain to her foundations and caused her to turn against herself arms which had been forged to drive out the invader.

Godoy's compatriots have drenched him in contempt – the contempt of the passionate for the lukewarm. But it is by no means proved that passion, though it may tone up individuals, assures the prosperity of States.

Manuel, 'the incomparable Manuel' – who was really, perhaps, no more than a cock of his local walk with an eye for the main chance – spent forty-two years in expiating his follies, his faults and, it may be, his crimes. Peace be to his frivolous soul! And let posterity, all passion spent, see in him now only the representative, born out of time, of a past that was pleasant; let it extend to him some indulgence, as to a man who shed hardly any blood, protected Goya, interested himself in the natural sciences and could never resist effectively a woman's smile.

## *Table of Events*

|       |           |      |                                                                        |
|-------|-----------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12th. | November  | 1748 | Birth of Charles de Bourbon.                                           |
| 9th.  | December  | 1751 | Birth of Maria Luisa of Parma.                                         |
| 4th.  | September | 1765 | Marriage of Charles and Maria Luisa                                    |
| 12th. | May       | 1767 | Birth of Manuel Godoy                                                  |
|       |           | 1784 | Godoy joins the bodyguards                                             |
|       |           | 1785 | Godoy is presented to Maria Luisa                                      |
| 14th. | December  | 1788 | Death of Charles III. Charles IV ascends the throne                    |
|       | January   | 1791 | Godoy promoted general                                                 |
| 20th. | November  | 1792 | Godoy principal Secretary of State                                     |
| 7th.  | March     | 1793 | The French Republic declares war on Spain                              |
| 22nd. | July      | 1795 | The Peace of Bâle                                                      |
| 4th.  | September | 1795 | Godoy created Prince of the Peace                                      |
| 18th. | August    | 1796 | Franco-Spanish alliance of San Ildefonso                               |
| 18th. | October   | 1796 | Spain declares war on Great Britain                                    |
|       | September | 1797 | Godoy marries the Countess of Chinchon                                 |
| 28th. | March     | 1798 | Godoy leaves office                                                    |
|       |           | 1799 | Godoy returns to favour                                                |
|       | October   | 1800 | Birth of Carlotta, daughter of Godoy                                   |
|       | May       | 1801 | The 'War of the Oranges'.                                              |
|       | June      | 1801 | Godoy becomes generalissimo                                            |
| 6th.  | June      | 1801 | Treaty of Badajoz                                                      |
| 25th. | March     | 1802 | Peace of Amiens                                                        |
| 23rd. | July      | 1802 | Death of Duchess of Alba                                               |
|       | September | 1802 | Marriage of the Prince of the Asturias with Marie Antoinette of Naples |
| 19th. | October   | 1803 | Treaty of 'the subventions'                                            |
| 12th. | December  | 1804 | Rupture with England                                                   |
|       | January   | 1805 | Godoy embarks on secret negotiations at Paris                          |

|                  |           |                                                                           |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21st. October    | 1805      | Battle of Trafalgar                                                       |
| 12th. August     | 1806      | Recapture of Buenos Ayres from the English                                |
| 14th. October    | 1806      | Godoy's manifesto to the Spanish nation                                   |
| 13th. January    | 1807      | Godoy becomes Grand Admiral                                               |
| 22nd. October    | 1807      | War declared on Portugal                                                  |
| 27th. October    | 1807      | Treaty of Fontainebleau                                                   |
| 29th. October    | 1807      | Arrest of Prince of the Asturias                                          |
| 23rd. January    | 1808      | Acquittal of 'the accused of the Escorial'                                |
| 17th. March      | 1808      | Outbreak at Aranjuez                                                      |
| 18th. March      | 1808      | Godoy deprived of his offices                                             |
| 19th. March      | 1808      | Godoy discovered, molested and imprisoned. First abdication of Charles IV |
| 22nd. March      | 1808      | Godoy taken to Pinto                                                      |
| 3rd. April       | 1808      | Godoy transferred to Villaviciosa                                         |
| 23rd. April      | 1808      | Godoy conducted to Bayonne                                                |
| 6th. May         | 1808      | Charles IV gives up his crown to Napoleon                                 |
| May-September    | 1808      | Charles IV, Maria Luisa and Godoy at Compiègne                            |
| Oct. 1808 - June | 1812      | Residence at Marseilles                                                   |
| 16th. July       | 1812      | Arrival at Rome                                                           |
| 18th. June       | 1815      | Battle of Waterloo                                                        |
| 2nd. January     | 1819      | Death of Maria Luisa                                                      |
| 19th. January    | 1819      | Death of Charles IV                                                       |
|                  | 1828      | Death of the Princess of the Peace.                                       |
|                  |           | Godoy marries Pepita Tudo                                                 |
|                  | 1832      | Godoy settles at Paris                                                    |
| September        | 1833      | Death of Ferdinand VII                                                    |
|                  | 1834      | Pepita Tudo abandons Godoy                                                |
|                  | 1836-1837 | Publication of Godoy's Memoirs                                            |
| 30th. April      | 1844      | Godoy's goods are theoretically restored to him                           |
| 31st. May        | 1847      | Godoy recovers some of his titles                                         |
| 4th. October     | 1851      | Death of Godoy                                                            |
| 16th. January    | 1852      | Godoy's burial at the Père Lachaise                                       |











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